CUBISTS
AND POST-IMPRESSIONISM

GLEIZES
Man on Balcony

Cubists and Post-Impressionism

BY

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TO THAT SPIRIT

the beating of whose restless wings
is heard in every land

FOREWORD TO SECOND EDITION

THIS book was written in 1913 and published in March, 1914. Six months later Europe was in war.

The academic historian will seek the cause or causes of the war in more or less concrete events and more or less obvious ambitions and aspirations of this or that nation.

The profounder and more philosophical searcher after the motives and forces that control the destinies of man may reach the conclusion that the development of the western world had reached a condition where an explosion was inevitable, or, as one might say, an equilibrium so unstable a crash could not be avoided.

The assassination of a Grand Duke could not plunge a world into war unless the world was on the verge of war. Princes, Grand-dukes, Kings and Queens have been assassinated with no results other than a few headlines and messages of condolence, but when Europe is ready for war and war is inevitable one excuse is as good as another. For a long time prior to the assassination of the Grand Duke at Sarajevo, 1914, the nations of not only Europe but the Orient were on edge. A war spirit was prevalent in even this country.

In 1912 the writer published a book which dealt with the existing competitive conditions in the industrial and commercial world. On pages 41-42 of that book I said:

> "The history of nations shows how the pendulum of progress swings to and fro from perfection in little things to perfection in big things. At the same period one nation may be doing things intensively, while another is doing things in a spirit of extension; one may be living a life of extraordinary fullness within its gates, another may find satisfaction only in conquering the earth.*

* "The New Competition," 6th Edition, A. C. McClurg & Co.

"Again at different periods the ambitions of mankind are widely different. For a time the nations are content within their borders, are absorbed in building their cities, their cathedrals, their monuments — in artistic and intellectual pursuits; the conflicts are few and personal or local in character; there is an astonishing development of every trade, every craft. Suddenly there comes a change, due, perhaps, to some great invention or discovery, or, perhaps, to the restless personality of some mighty leader who reflects the spirit of his times. The period of intense development is at an end; as if moved by one impulse the nations embark on a period of conquest, of discovery, of colonization; a period wherein local barriers are annihilated and countries come together in one grand clash, one supreme struggle either on the field of battle or in the more bloodless but none the less fierce rivalry for commercial and industrial victories.

"We are in the midst of one of those great movements, one of those world-wide conflicts. It is so fierce that again and again are nations on the verge of declaring war for no reason whatsoever except trade jealousy. Projects of territorial expansion are justified by commercial reasons. Controversies concerning this country or that, over China, Persia, Turkey, are in substance, if not in form, trade controversies.

"The world has gone mad over trade and the problems of trade. Financiers and diplomats exhaust their energies trying to devise new schemes, new treaties, new tariffs whereby one nation can sell the world more than it buys, whereby the 'balance of trade' can be turned hither and thither at the will of man — this is the era of 'dollar diplomacy.'

"*The conquests of Alexander, of Caesar, of Napoleon, were as nothing compared with the struggle that is now on for trade supremacy — a struggle that is made fiercer from year to year by marvelous inventions and developments in means of communication and transportation. Peoples, heretofore safe in their isolation, are swept into the maelstrom — the globe is a sizzling unit.*"

Two years later that commercial warfare developed its logical and inevitable sequence.

The foregoing may well be read in connection with the lines at the top of page 4 which are unchanged from the first edition of this book:

"The recent exhibition was not an isolated movement. There are no *isolated* movements in life. The International Exhibition was just

as inevitable as the Progressive political convention of 1912 in Chicago.

"The world is filled with ferment — ferment of new ideas, ferment of originality and individuality, of assertion of independence. This is true in religion, science, politics as well as in art. It is true in business. *New thought* is everywhere."

The simple truth is we are living through one of the world's great epochs and we do not realize it. We stand aghast before the immediate.

The horrible side of war is so appalling we see and think of nothing else.

The ugly side of the new art is so startling we see and think of nothing else.

The radical and socialistic things that are being done by our own Government are so foreign to our habits and prejudices we feel only *fears* for the future, whereas we should be filled with the most splendid *hopes* and *convictions* that out of these daring experiments *good will come.*

We should realize that one of the bright sides of the war is the superb way our Government is bursting century-old shackles.

Politically we are in a period of *post-traditionalism.*

Asthetically we are in a position of *post-traditionalism.*

Men are going so far as to say that the fact a thing has been done in a certain way for a certain length of time is sufficient reason for discarding that *way* and trying its opposite.

It is good to be alive in a post-traditional epoch. A year of Lloyd George is worth a decade of Queen Victoria. The man of fifty who dies in 1925 will have lived more than most of the world's centuries.

He will have lived through the greatest war the world has known.

He will have seen this country jostled from her position of selfish isolation.

He will have seen the beginning of the age of electricity.

He will have seen men look through matter and into the human body, conquer both air and water, triumph over many diseases by new methods, and penetrate the hidden depths of mind and soul by new processes.

In art he will have seen this country give the world a new architecture, more perfect, more useful, more responsive to human needs than either the Greek or the Gothic.

He will have seen experiments and departures in music and poetry so strangely beautiful that we who hear and read know not what to say.

He will have seen in painting and sculpture splendid works of the heart and the imagination, heroic efforts to express human emotions in new ways in line and color and mass.

Above all it will be his good fortune to have seen *all* these movements and accomplishments *in the making*—their *imperfections* which are always so *revealing* as distinguished from their *perfections* which are always so *concealing*.

It takes giants to live these days and not succumb to the horrors of the war—or, as some might add, to the horrors of art.

The man who can take it all in without being overwhelmed, who has the courage to gaze steadfastly at all that goes on about him, letting nothing pass without scrutiny, turning his back on nothing, demanding the why and the wherefore of everything, challenging, questioning, discussing, appreciating, loving—such a man LIVES.

As we look back we can see that the war was preceded by a period of strange restlessness. Nations which had long been sleeping turned in their beds and stretched themselves. They had had dreams of conquest, of world dominion, of uplift and power and they sought to realize those dreams. Scarcely awake they began fighting.

Millions of lives have been given, yet no man or nation can state in plain language and precise terms just what the world is fighting for.

"To make the world safe for Democracy," that is one definition, but the world may be as safe for democracy as democracy is for the world. So far in the history of mankind democracy has fitted only a few highly developed peoples.

No, the Allies are not fighting to "make the world safe for Democracy," they have other dreams; England has dreams of Colonial expansion; France of Alsace-Lorraine; Italy of the Trentino; Japan of power in China.

But is it possible that millions of men have laid down their lives for any of these things? for a strip of territory here and there? for some more or less real extensions of power in this or that quarter?

No, NO, NO, a thousand times, NO.

Democracy will spread over the globe as fast as it justifies itself by its peaceful deeds and achievements. Empires will expand as fast as their expansion is consistent with the progress of mankind. As a forcing process war is a failure.

Men *think* they offer their lives for all these shibboleths and petty gains, but in truth they die for things the mind of man can only dimly grasp and the speech of man but vaguely define. They give their lives because the period of great strivings and great sacrifices has been reached, because the womb of progress has borne its burden the allotted period and the pains of deliverance are upon us.

War is either a new birth or it is a condemnation of all religions and philosophies. It is either a species of crucifixion leading to finer and higher ideals or it is the veritable triumph of Hell. It is the Cross or the bottomless pit.

Rather than permit ourselves to think for a moment that millions of homes have been made desolate for the pitifully

small ends urged as objects of the war, is it not more inspiring to feel that this mighty conflict is in some mysterious way a clearing of the world's atmosphere, a destruction of spiritual not material barriers?

Is it not more inspiring to feel that we are fighting to make the world safer for *ideals,* rather than democracy which is but a form of government?

The basic thought is that when men *think* they are fighting and dying to make *other peoples* better, the fundamental and saving truth is they are fighting to make *themselves* better.

Why should England or France or Italy, or this country, sacrifice her young men to make Germany, or Austria or Turkey better? That would be the Mahommedan doctrine of spreading religion by the sword.

But if the mothers and wives and children of those who die can know that every life is given *literally and wholly for its own country,* then the burden of sacrifice is lightened.

The American dead have given their lives to make their own country — not the world — safer for democracy, safer for broader, nobler, purer ideals; to give it a wider, more generous, more sympathetic outlook; to lift it out of narrow ruts and prejudices and turn it loose in the limitless fields of universal progress.

Oh, you young men who have entered upon the contest, it matters not where you die, whether in Europe, at sea, in training camp or at home while making your preparations to go — it is all the same; the real battlefield is here, not there; the real fight is against ourselves, not others, and no matter the shifting fortunes of war on this front or that, no matter the terms of peace whether politically favorable or not, your victory is sure, your deaths are not in vain, your country will emerge a bigger, a better, a more glorious nation.

When we place flowers upon your graves it will be to

commemorate the fight you made against *us*, the sacrifice you made that *we* might have broader and finer visions, and we will know that every man of every land who died, *died to free his own country*, not from foreign foe or aggressor but from the forces of darkness within.

And the beauty of it all is that those of us who are left and those who are to come will be nobler men and women — made so by the purification of sacrifice.

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ALAS! ALAS!!

"It is unlikely that any painters will ever again have to face the hostility which was manifested against the Impressionists. The repetition of such a phenomenon would be impossible. The case of the Impressionists, in which withering scorn yielded place to admiration, has put criticism on its guard. It will surely stand as a warning, and ought to prevent the recurrence of a similar outburst of indignation against the innovators and independents whom time may yet bring forth."

—"Manet and the French Impressionists,"
by Theodore Duret, pp. 180, 181.

Cubists and Post-Impressionism

I

A SENSATION

SINCE the exhibit at the Columbian Exposition (1893) nothing has happened in the world of American art so stimulating as the recent INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF MODERN ART. New York and Chicago, spring of 1913.*

"Stimulating" is the word, for while the recent exhibition may have lacked some of the good, solidly painted pictures found in the earlier, it contained so much that was fresh, new, original—eccentric, if you prefer—that it gave our art-world food for thought—and heated controversy.

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Art thrives on controversy—like every human endeavor. The fiercer the controversy the *surer*, the *sounder*, the *saner* the outcome.

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Perfection is unattainable. As man in his loftiest flight stretches forth his hand to seize a star he drops back to earth. The finer, the purer the development of any art the

* The names of the men who, in a spirit of disinterested devotion to art, organized this exhibition should not be forgotten. They were: Arthur B. Davies, J. Mowbray Clarke, Elmer L. McRae, Walt Kuhn, Karl Anderson, George Bellows, D. Putnam Brinley, Leon Dabo, Jo Davidson, Guy Pene DuBois, Sherry E. Fry, William J. Glackens, Robert Henri, E. A. Kramer, Ernest Lawson, Jonas Lie, George B. Luks, Jerome Myers, Frank A. Nankivell, Bruce Porter, Walter Pach, Maurice Prendergast, John Sloan, Henry Fitch Taylor, Allen Tucker, Mahonri Young.

For detailed account of earlier exhibitions held by Mr. Alfred Stieglitz—the real pioneer—in the Photo-Secession Gallery, 291 Fifth Ave., New York, see Appendix.[1]

more certain the reaction, the return to elemental conditions—to begin over again.

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The young sculptor looks at the chaste perfection of Greek sculpture and says, "What is the use? I will do something different." The young painter looks at the great painters of yesterday and exclaims, "What is the use? I cannot excel them in their way; I must do something in my own way." It is the same in business; the young merchant studies the methods of the successful men in his line and says, "It is idle for me to copy their methods. I will do something different, something in my own way," and he displays his goods differently, advertises differently, conducts his business differently, and *if successful* is hailed as a genius, if a failure he is regarded as a visionary or an eccentric—the result making all the difference in the world in the verdict of the public.

Painting today is a terrible problem to an absolutely sincere, honest, and yet ambitious mind.

Fired to set forth something of his very own, to avoid plagiarism and give the world something it has never yet received, the artist, in whatever direction he advances, finds the horizon bounded by a great master whom he cannot hope to surpass. Well, indeed, may he ask what is the use of trying to do what Van Eyck, Botticelli, Vermeer, Rembrandt, Veronese, Michael Angelo, Velasquez—nay, even what Constable, Corot, Claude Monet, and Signac have done to perfection?

In despair at surpassing the limits set by the great masters of progress he harks back, as the pre-Raphaelites did, to the painters before Raphael. Alas, Fra Lippi and Taddeo Gaddi are soon found to be too sophisticated. He goes back farther, to Giotto, to Orcagna, even to the Egyptians, and with the same result. At last he takes his courage in his hands and, throwing overboard the whole cargo of art history, ancient and modern, he seeks to forget that picture was ever painted, and with eyes freed from traditional vision he seeks to recreate the barbaric art of infancy.

Call this man an extremist if you like, but do not lightly dub him insincere and charlatan. He is the counterpart in art of the

extremist in politics, the man who has no patience with palliative measures, who demands the whole loaf and nothing but the loaf, who kicks savagely away the fragments of bread tendered him by the moderate and respectable. A dangerous man he may be, but he is no trifler; and, if he succeeds in his purpose, as extremists sometimes do, the whipped world at his feet hails him as reformer and benefactor of humanity.*

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The Columbian Exposition gave American art a tremendous impetus forward, but of late it has been getting a little smug; the International Exhibition came and gave our complacency a severe jolt.

The net result is that American art has received another impulse forward; it will do bigger and finer and saner things. It will not copy the eccentricities, the exaggerations, the morbid enthusiasms of the recent exhibition, because America as yet is not given to eccentricities and morbidness — though it may be to a youthful habit of exaggeration. America is essentially sane and healthful — say quite practical — in its outlook, hence it will absorb all that is good in the extreme modern movement and reject what is bad.

Neither our students nor our painters will be carried off their feet but they will be helped onward. They will be helped in their technic, and they will see things from new angles, they will be more independent, in short they will be better and bigger painters.

They will not be Cubists, Orphists, or Futurists, but they will absorb all there is of good in Cubism, Orphism, Futurism — and other "isms;" and bear in mind it is the *ist* who is always blazing a trail somewhere; he may lose himself in the dense undergrowth of his theories but he at least marks a path others have not trodden.

* "Revolution in Art," by Frank Rutter, pp. 14, 15.

The recent exhibition was not an isolated movement. There are no *isolated* movements in life. The International Exhibition was just as inevitable as the Progressive political convention of 1912 in Chicago.

The world is filled with ferment—ferment of new ideas, ferment of originality and individuality, of assertion of independence. This is true in religion, science, politics as well as in art. It is true in business. *New thought* is everywhere. The most radical suggestions are debated at the dinner table. In politics what would have been considered socialistic twenty years ago is accepted today as reasonable. To the conservative masses these new departures may seem like a wild overturning of all that is sacred, but there is no need for fear; all that *is really sound* will gain in the end.

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Neither Cubism, Futurism nor any other "ism" troubles the really great painter; it is the little fellow who fumes and swears.

The poise of the great man is not at all disturbed by the eccentric and the bizarre; on the contrary he looks with a curious eye to see if something of value may not be found.

Whistler would not have painted Cubist pictures, but having known the man I can say that nothing there may be of good in Cubism would have gotten by the penetrating vision of that great painter.

It is characteristic of the little man to ridicule or resent everything he does not understand; it is characteristic of the great man to be silent in the presence of what he does not understand.

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Just now the older men are violently opposed to the newer; there is no attempt at understanding and there is abundant ridicule instead of sympathy.

This is inevitable and quite in accord with human nature, but it is a pity. The old and the new are not rivals; the new is simply a departure from the old, simply an attempt to do something different with line and color. The older men should watch the younger with keenest interest; they may feel sure the new is foredoomed to failure, but that is no cause for rejoicing; on the contrary the older man should always be sorry to see the soaring flights of youth come to grief.

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Because a man buys a few Cubist pictures it must not be assumed he is a believer in Cubism.

Because a man has a few books on socialism or anarchism in his library we do not assume he is a socialist, or an anarchist; on the contrary it is commonly assumed he is simply broadly and sanely interested in social and political theories. The radical may not convince me he is right, but he may show me I am wrong.

The man who flies into a passion at pictures because they are not like the pictures he owns is on a par with the man who flies into a passion at books because they are not like the books he owns — the world is filled with such men, unreceptive, unresponsive; many intelligent in their narrow way, but bigoted.

To most men a new idea is a greater shock than a cold plunge in winter.

Personally I have no more interest in Cubism than in any other "ism," but failure to react to new impressions is a sure sign of age. I would hate to be so old that a new picture or a new idea would frighten me.

I would like to own Raphaels and Titians and Rembrandts and Velasquezes, but I can't afford it. I say I would like to *own* them; no, I would not, for I have the conviction

that no man has *the right* to appropriate to himself the work of the great masters. Their paintings belong to the world and should be in public places for the enjoyment and instruction of *all*.

It is the high privilege of the private buyer to buy the works of *new men*, and by encouraging them disclose a Rembrandt, a Hals, a Millet, a Corot, a Manet, but when the public begins to want the pictures the private buyer, instead of bidding against the public, should step one side; his task is done, his opportunity has passed.

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Most men buy pictures not because they want them, but because some one else wants them.

The man who gives half a million for a Rembrandt does so not because he knows or cares anything about the picture, but solely because he is made to believe some one else wants it $450,000 worth.

Read this:

The crowning event of the day was the sale of Rembrandt's "Bathsheba." The bidding started at 150,000 françs and within a couple of minutes a perfect whirlwind of bids had carried the price to 500,000 francs offered by a dealer, Mr. Trotti.

Already the smaller fry among the bidders had been eliminated and the contest was circumscribed to a small group, Messrs. Duveen, Wildenstein, Tedesco, Muller and Trotti being the most ardent in the battle.

"Six hundred thousand!" cried Mr. Duveen.

"Six hundred and fifty thousand," said Mr. Wildenstein.

Mr. Duveen replied with a nod which meant the addition of another 50,000. Then with bids of 10,000 and 25,000 the price mounted, the struggle developing into a duel between Mr. Wildenstein and Mr. Duveen. Eight hundred thousand francs was reached and left behind; 900,000 francs in turn was passed.

"Nine hundred and fifty thousand," rapped out Mr. Duveen.

"Nine hundred and sixty thousand," responded Mr. Wildenstein.

Then came "nine hundred and seventy thousand" and "nine hun-

dred and eighty thousand." By this time the entire gathering was spellbound by the spectacle of the gladiatorial contest for the picture.

"Nine hundred and ninety thousand," said Mr. Wildenstein.

There was an instant of silence.

"A million!"

Every eye turned from the speaker, Mr. Duveen, to gaze on Mr. Wildenstein expectantly. Then there was silence, signifying his withdrawal from the fight.

A mighty hubbub arose. The Rembrandt had been knocked down to Mr. Duveen for a million francs, or, with the commission, 1,100,000 francs. Never has such a price been given for a Rembrandt.

This is not dealing in art, it is art on the horse-block.

Here is the record of that one painting:

1734—Sold at Antwerp for	$ 109
1791—Sold at Paris for	240
1814—Sold at London for	525
1830—Sold at London for	790
1831—Sold at London for	792
1832—Sold at London for	1,260
1841—Sold at Paris for	1,576
1913—Sold at Paris for	220,000

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During the exhibition in New York and Chicago the pictures were the one topic of conversation; for the time being it was worth while to dine out; society became almost animated.

I recall one delightful and irascible old gentleman, critic and painter, who had not had a fresh appreciation for twenty-five years. For him art ended with the Barbizon school. Whistler, Monet, Degas had no sure places.

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We all have the courage of *others'* convictions.

The new, however good, is always queer; the old, however bad, is never strange.

Most people laugh at new pictures because they are

afraid if they don't laugh at the pictures, other people w
laugh at *them.*

Now and then a man laughs at a queer picture becau
he can't help it, *he* is a *joy.*

Laughter is the honest emotion of the child, on t
grown-up it is often a mark of ignorance.

It is so easy to ridicule what one does not underst
and *dares* not like.

Laughter never stops to think—if it did there would
less laughter.

If you *feel* like laughing at a picture, laugh by all me
it will do you good, but be sure you *really feel* like laughi
and to make sure ask yourself this question, "If that pict
were the only one in the room and I were alone with
would it strike me as laughable?"

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It always takes just about so many years. What h
pened with the Barbizon School happened with Impre
ism; what happened with Impressionism, will happen w
Post-Impressionism; what will happen with Post-Impr
sionism will surely happen with post-post-Impression
and so on. One movement follows another, as season foll
season. Life is rhythm.

Each generation thinks itself unique in its experie

We go to an exhibition of cubist pictures and we t
nothing like that ever happened before, hence we feel
in denouncing them.

We admit England was wrong when it ridiculed Tu
that France was wrong when it ridiculed Corot, that
was wrong when it derided Millet, Manet, Monet, D
and a host of other great men, but *we* are *not* wrong
we deride the new men. Why? Because we think the
newer and stranger than the men named.

We accept Wagner as a genius, but Strauss—oh, no, he is *too* strange, but there are stranger composers than Strauss already at work and we must travel fast to keep up with the procession.*

Be very sure the Cubists, the Futurists, and all the other queer "ists" would not make the impression they are making if there were not a good reason for it, if the times were not ripe for a change.

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Broadly speaking we are changing from the *perfections* of Impressionism to the *imperfections* of Post-Impressionism; from the *achievements* of a school, a movement, that has done the best it could, to the *attempts,* the *experiments,* the *gropings,* of new men along new lines.

It is the purpose of this book to describe some of the changes that are taking place and *try* to explain them in plain, every-day terms.

* Five short pieces of the music by Arnold Schoenberg were played for the first time in Chicago, December 31, 1913, by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and duly ridiculed.

"Had Mr. Richard Swiveller been present at the performance of the new Stravinsky-Nijinsky ballet, 'Le Sacre du Printemps,' at Drury Lane on Friday night he would certainly have pronounced it 'a staggerer.' Both the music of M. Stravinsky and the choreography of M. Nijinsky are more defiantly anarchical than anything we have ever had before, and the purport of it all was a dark mystery, even though Mr. Edwin Evans was deputed to throw light on it in a long explanatory prologue. As every one knows by this time, M. Nijinsky is the apostle of a sort of 'post-impressionist' or 'Cubist' revolution of the dance, in which mere gracefulness is ruthlessly sacrificed to significance and force of expression, and everything is stated in terms of symbolism, and in the new ballet he seems to have carried his theories into the most extreme practice. . . . M. Stravinsky seems as determined to make the hearer sit up as his colleague. Save that he condescends to regular rhythms, his music is the last word in emancipation from form and the cacophony of it is at times distressing."—(London Sunday Times, July 13, 1913, from its article on the new Russian ballet, the sensation of the season.) When this Stravinsky music was played for the Russian ballet in Chicago in 1915 the same critics and patrons who ridiculed Schoenberg went into raptures of praise.

The curse of art literature and professional art criticism is *art-jargon.*

Every department of human activity from sport to science, baseball to philosophy, speedily develops its own jargon and the tendency is for the jargon to become denser and denser and so more and more obscure its subject, until some man with horse-sense—like Huxley in science and William James in philosophy—restores the use of everyday English.

Some jargon like that of the baseball reporter is intensely vivid and amusing, it is language in the making, but the jargon of the art critic is deadly, it is neither vivid nor interesting—it is simply hypnotic. It is only when the critic gets so angry he forgets his jargon that he becomes intelligible—and betrays himself.

The reputation of many a preacher, many an orator, depends wholly upon his command of jargon, his ability to utter endless phrases which are either stock ideas, old as the hills, or which *sound* as if they meant something but on analysis prove quite barren.

II

POST-IMPRESSIONISM

POST-Impressionism means exactly what the prefix means — the art-development *following* Impressionism. It does not mean a further, or a higher, or a more subtle form of Impressionism, but it means something radically different, it means a *reaction* from Impressionism.

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The evolution of the new movement has been logical and inevitable.

After the Barbizon school with its romantic representation of nature, there came inevitably the realistic painters, headed by Courbet, later by Manet — men who painted things not romantically but realistically, pitilessly, brutally. There was the same rage against these men as against the Cubists today. Both Whistler and Manet were in the Salon des Refuses of 1864.

Along with the men who painted *things* as they saw them, came naturally men like Monet, Sissley, Pisarro, Seurat, Signac, who tried endless experiments in the effort to paint *light* as they saw it.

So that the final twenty-five years of the last century were given up in France to attempts to paint *things* and *light* as they seem.

After the painting of *things* and *light* one would say the art of painting had touched its limits, that there was nothing more to do. But, no, there is the painting of *neither* things nor light — the painting of *emotions* — the painting of pure line and color compositions for the sake of the pleasure such harmonies afford — *the expression of one's inner self.*

It was while Manet was painting *things* as they are, and Monet was painting *light* as it is, that Whistler was painting both things and light but with an entirely different object in view, namely, the production of *color harmonies* superior to either thing-effects or light-effects.

To the following résumé it is obvious another paragraph must be added to bring the record down to date.

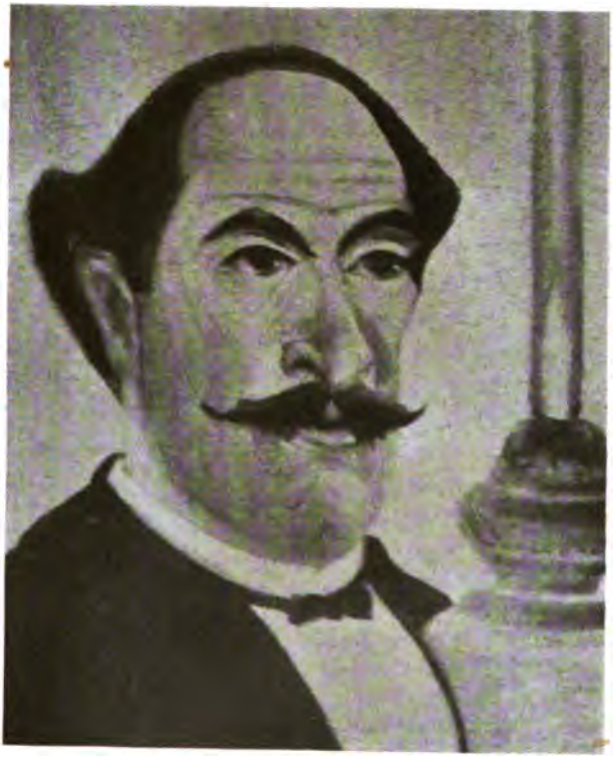
Painting in France in the nineteenth century followed a course parallel with that of the intellectual life of the country, it adapted itself to the various changes in modes of thought, it took upon itself a succession of forms corresponding to those which were evolved in literature.

At the beginning of the century, under the Empire, painting was classical. It was primarily engaged in rendering scenes borrowed from the antique world of Greece and Rome, subjects derived from fable and mythology. Historical painting formed the essence of high art. It was based upon the nude, treated according to the classical model. Two masters — David and Ingress — were its loftiest expression. After them classical art was continued in an enfeebled condition by painters of only secondary importance.

The new spirit of romanticism, however, which had arisen in literature, also made its appearance in painting. Delacroix was the master in whom it found its most complete expression. The tones of classical art, sober, restrained, and often cold, gave place in his work to warm and brilliant coloration. For the nicely balanced scenes of classical antiquity, he substituted compositions tumultuous with movement. Romanticism developed freedom of action and expressiveness of pose to their utmost limits.

Painting was then conquered by realism, which had also invaded literature. Courbet was its great initiator. He painted the life he saw around him in a direct, robust manner. He also painted landscape with a truthfulness that was informed by a powerful emotion. At the same time, Rousseau and Corot had also brought landscape painting into close touch with nature. They had rediscovered its soul and its charm. Finally, crowning, as it were, the work of their predecessors, came Manet and the Impressionists.*

* "Manet and the French Impressionists," by Theodore Duret Introduction.



ROUSSEAU

ROUSSEAU
Landscape

Turner was the forerunner of Impressionism, the father of attempts to paint brilliant *light* effects, Whistler was the forerunner of Post-Impressionism, the father of attempts to paint *line and color* compositions.

Turner did not carry his theories to the scientific extremes of the Impressionists and Neo-Impressionists; Whistler did not carry his attempts to the abstract extremes of the Compositionalists and the Cubists; but in their work are found the seeds of all there is in Impressionism and Post-Impressionism.

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"Do you say that this is a correct representation of Battersea Bridge?"

"I did not intend it to be a 'correct' portrait of the bridge. It is only a moonlight scene, and the pier in the center of the bridge may or may not be like the piers at Battersea Bridge as you know them in broad daylight. As to what the picture represents, that depends upon who looks at it. To some persons it may represent all that is intended; to others it may represent nothing."

"The prevailing color is blue?"

"Perhaps."

"Are those figures on the top of the bridge intended for people?"

"They are just what you like."

"Is that a barge beneath?"

"Yes. I am very much encouraged at your perceiving that. My whole scheme was only to bring about a certain harmony of color."*

◆ ◆ ◆

Most painters are so intent upon the *subjects* of their work they give little thought to color harmonies. Whistler was

* Testimony of Whistler in suit of "Whistler v. Ruskin."

the one great modern exception; his first thought was to produce *beautiful effects* in line and color, hence his titles, "Nocturnes," "Symphonies," "Arrangements," and so on. He did not like to give his portraits the names of his sitters. Where other painters emphasize the "subjects" and the "stories" of their pictures he tried to suppress both and direct the attention of the beholder to the painting. He was the forerunner of recent attempts to do with line and color what the musician does with sound. He was the leader of the revolt against the "story-telling" picture.

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Millet is a good illustration of the painter to whom "subject" was everything, and technic of quite secondary importance. I think it is generally conceded that as a painter, a master of technic, he did not rank very high, but he had a faculty for painting subjects, scenes from life, that grip. As a painter Whistler was incomparably superior to Millet, but just because he was a great master of technic and quite indifferent to the story-telling side of his pictures he did not become so popular.*

◆ ◆ ◆

There are many actions and reactions in art, many evolutions and involutions, but the great rhythmical sweep of the pendulum is from, let us say, *studio*-art to *nature*-art, and back from *nature*-art to *studio*-art.

From works of *observation* to works of *imagination*, and back from the use of the *imagination* to the use of *observation*.

* How little the world cared for Millet when he lived is a matter of history. He painted his greatest pictures in a room without a fire, in straw shoes, and with a horse blanket on his shoulders, and often he and his wife went without food. "All his efforts to exhibit in Paris were in vain. Even in 1859, 'Death and the Woodcutter' was rejected by the Salon. The public laughed, being accustomed to peasants in comic opera, and, at best, his pictures were honored by a caricature in a humorous paper." His pictures brought from fifty to sixty dollars.

For a time men work feverishly in the seclusion of their closets painting, writing, modelling, composing beautiful things, pure products of their imaginations, then comes the reaction and they feel the need of renewing their vigor by touching heel to earth. They draw aside their curtains, throw open their doors and go out into the sunlight to breathe the fresh air and gain new inspirations from contact with nature.

That is what happens in art once in so often.

The Barbizon school was a studio school. It walked the streets and the fields; it looked at men and women at work and at play, but when it came to paint it did not paint outdoors with object and easel in close contact; it retired within its doors and transformed life and nature as great romantic story-tellers translate their impressions into fairy-tales and romances.

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It seems a far cry from Millet to Chabaud but in some aspects of their attitude toward art they are nearly akin. Between the two there intervened Impressionism, that is all. Millet painted *labor*. And what is the painting by Chabaud, "The Laborer," but a more elemental Millet? It lacks the romantic, the poetic qualities of Millet's "Labor," for instance, or his "Sower"—paintings famous in prints and reproductions, but it is none the less a vivid representation of labor.

To the admirers of Millet it may seem sacrilegious to even mention Chabaud in comparison, but, confining our attention to the one painting reproduced herein, there is no question that in its elemental strength, its simplicity, it possesses a quality, a certain bald dramatic quality that Millet lacks, though Millet's "Sower" may possess qualities you like more.

However it is with no intention to make a comparison between two men so very different, that I mention them, but rather for the purpose of pointing out that the attitude of both to their art is fundamentally the same — they use art to *express themselves* and not to imitate what they see.

This is the way Millet worked. "He himself went about Barbizon like a peasant. And he might have been seen wandering over the woods and fields with an old, red cloak, wooden shoes, and a weather-beaten straw hat. He rose at sunrise, and wandered about the country as his parents had done. He guarded no flocks, drove no cows, and no yokes of oxen or horses; he carried neither mattock nor spade but rested on his stick; he was equipped with only the *faculty* of *observation* and *poetic intention* . . . he leant on the garden wall with his arms crossed on his breast, and looked into the setting sun as it threw a rosy veil over field and forest. He heard the chime of vesper bells, watched the people pray and then return home. And he returned also, and read the Bible by lamplight, while his wife sewed and the children slept. When all was quiet he closed the book and began *to dream. . . . On the morrow he painted.*" *

This is the method of all the very great art the world has ever known — first *to see;* and then *to dream* and then *on the morrow to paint.*

Impressionism cut out the *dreams*—it painted what it *saw.*

There were never in the world peasants such as Millet painted, or woods such as Daubigny painted. People thought there were until the Impressionists came and turned on the light.

Corot's silvery glades have a closer relationship to nature. He felt the reaction that was in the air. He was almost an

* "History of Modern Painting," Richard Muther, Vol. II, pp. 487-8.

Impressionist but not quite. One feels the *poetic,* the *imaginative* — that is, the *studio* quality in his work. He sought nature but not in the spirit displayed by the Impressionists.

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The reaction began with Courbet and was given a powerful impetus by Manet who painted things not as he *imagined* them but as he *saw* them, and he did not try to see interesting people and things, he did not look for the *picturesque* but he painted anything he happened to see upon the theory that the value of a work of art depends not upon its subject but upon its technic; that the worth of a painting is to be found in the painting and not in the object that happens to be painted.

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Manet painted very few pictures outdoors. In the literal sense he did not belong to the *plein air* school. Almost all his work was done indoors. But it was in no sense studio-art as we have used the term. He painted in his studio as directly as Monet painted outdoors. He painted a sitter with the same realism that Monet painted a haystack; and if he painted a bull fight from memory or from a sketch, he did it with the *intention* to reproduce the scene literally.

Whistler had his literal moods, so to speak; his moments when with clear eye and vision unaffected by any conscious play of the imagination he would make marvellously faithful transcripts from life and nature, transcripts so faithful that Monet's at their best pale in comparison. I recall three exquisite marines which were painted in a boat, the canvases propped against a seat.

But for the most part he painted indoors and with the one end in view — the composition of line and color harmonies more beautiful than anything found in nature, just as the

musician seeks to compose harmonies more beautiful than any sounds found in nature.

In the clearness of his vision and the faithfulness with which he painted the things and people with which he came in contact Whistler was an Impressionist — an Impressionist long before Monet, but in his search after color and line music, in his attempts to do things beyond and above nature, he was a *Post*-Impressionist.

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From a psychological point of view it is not difficult to see how these movements come about.

Given exhibitions year after year filled with paintings of the imagination, with idealized peasants such as Millet's, and idealized landscapes such as Rousseau's, it is morally certain the younger painters will feel a restless longing to return to the realities of life, just as the reading or theater going public after being fed too long on fairy-tales and romances demand more realistic representations of life.

Every man who reads much has his fairy-tale period and his romantic period followed by a strong taste for realism, which in turn is followed by a new and finer appreciation of purely imaginative literature.

In his beliefs the normal man passes through a similar series of reactions from the acceptance of the marvellous in his childhood and youth to the sceptical rejection of the miraculous and the acceptance of only the literal and material in his buoyant manhood, thence to the profounder philosophy and mystical speculations of riper age.

The old, old conflict between *materialism* and *idealism*, between *seeing-knowing* and *thinking-feeling*, between the cruder actualities of the senses and the finer actualities of the imagination!

It is not that all men at a given time are idealists and at

another realists, any more than all painters in one decade are Impressionists, in another Post-Impressionists. Life does not move that way.

Between 1874 and 1900 Impressionism forged to the front and monopolized the attention of the art world, yet during that period there were painted more pictures of the Pre-Impressionist schools than ever before. The Impressionists made all the noise, the Pre-Impressionists did most of the work.

The net result was a large amount of absorption by the older schools of the good things in Impressionism, and a noticeable improvement in painting generally.

Just now the Post-Impressionists occupy the center of the stage and are making themselves so conspicuous the public is almost led to believe that both Impressionists and Pre-Impressionists no longer exist, that everything once considered good in art is being relegated to the storehouse.

Again, as a matter of fact, with all the noise made by the Post-Impressionists, it is beyond question true that never before were so many Impressionist and Pre-Impressionist pictures painted as now.

The stream of Pre-Impressionist and Impressionist pictures goes right on and in time history will repeat itself, the good in Post-Impressionism will be absorbed and the main current that supplies the great public with art will be *Pre*-impressionist + *Impressionist* + *Post*-impressionist, with as many more prefixes as the ingenuity of the artist can devise to describe his vagaries.

Painters are a good deal like inventors, each of whom thinks his invention sure to revolutionize the world, to find

in the end that his supposed invention is either not new or if new not valuable.

Now and then a painter like an inventor does do something that is revolutionary, but these geniuses are not common, and with even them critical research invariably finds they have simply built upon the labors of others. An Edison, a Bell, a Marconi appears only when electrical science has reached a stage where the inventions rather than the men are inevitable. All this is statistically demonstrated in the records of patent offices.

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We talk of this and that "period" in the work of a painter, a poet, a sculptor. Often the changes in mood and technique are marked and the transitions sharply defined. For the most part they are the turning from the imagination to observation and *vice versa.*

The brain is not unlike a factory; when filled to overflowing with raw material it must close its doors and work up its stock; when it has exhausted its store of impressions it must open its five senses to receive new.

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According to Hegel, the great German philosopher, there are three movements of the historical pendulum; for example, we have an age of materialism followed by an age whose sole interest is in psychical phenomena; this followed by an age which extracts the truth from both of these opposite hypotheses, the golden mean. Thus, in art, we have the classical spirit for the thesis, the modern art movement, its antithesis, and we may confidently expect and hope for an age which shall select the bold, fresh spirit of the modern movement and infuse it into the proportion of classical art, which shall be the great synthesis of the artistic future. Thus the extravagant and apparently insane movement of the Futurist and Cubist will be of the greatest value in reviving art, putting red blood into art again.*

* "The New Movement in Art from a Philosophical Standpoint," by Theo. LeFitz Simons.

A man can understand what is going on about him only by a knowledge of what has happened in the past — the wider his knowledge of past events, the clearer his understanding of present.

Space does not permit the printing in detail the ridicule that greeted Turner, Millet, Corot, Courbet, but it is important to open the eyes of the reader to the *fact* that men whose pictures are considered masterpieces today, and command fabulous sums, were met with the *same* scorn and derision that the new men of today meet.

History repeats itself — we accept as fine what our fathers laughed at; our sons will accept as fine what we laugh at, and so on to the end of time.

You readers and especially you museums, who are paying tens of thousands for pictures by Manet, Monet, Renoir and a host of other innovators, take to heart what follows.

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In 1874 the Impressionists held their first exhibition in a room rented from a photographer, 35 Boulevard des Capucines, Paris. They called themselves, *Société anonyme, des Artistes, Peintres, Sculpteurs et Graveurs.*

There were about thirty exhibitors in all; among them, Pissarro, Monet, Sisley, Renoir, Berthe Morisot, Cézanne, Guillaumin, who might be called the extremists; Degas, Bracquemond de Nittis, Brandon, Boudin, Cals, Gustave Collin, Labouche, Lépine, Rouart, and others were invited to take the edge off the novelties of the first named.*

Monet exhibited a picture named *"Impression; soliel levant."* In derision Louis Leroy called an article on the exhibition in "Charivari"† *"Exposition des Impressionists,"*

* See "Manet and the French Impressionists," by Duret, p. 112 *et seq.*, and a readable article, "The Master Impressionists," by C. L. Borgmeyer, in "Fine Arts Journal" for March, 1913.

† April 25, 1874.

and in spite of the protests of the painters themselves the name stuck—just as the name *Cubists,* derisively applied by Matisse, has stuck.

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This exhibition, which marked an epoch in French art, was a failure so far as immediate results went. The ridicule was such that the better known artists, ashamed of being caught in the company of the new men, "took good care not to run the risk a second time."

The pictures were subjected to all sorts of petty insults, "such as the placing of small coins upon the frames in derision, and jokes and jibes."

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The next year the Impressionists held no exhibition, but under dire need had a sale at the Hotel Drouot.

Claude Monet, Sisley, Renoir, Berthe Morisot, Cals, Cézanne, Degas, Guillaumin, de Nittis, and Pissarro were represented. There were some seventy pictures. The pictures were disliked and for some unknown reason the artists were considered as hardened members of the community. They only received laughable prices. Even the attempt to carry out the auction-room trick of having friends bid up the prices was not carried out successfully and many of the pictures were bid in by the penniless friends in this way, and withdrawn. Including these mistakes and the real sales they realized not much more than $2,000. In this sale of 1875, Renoir's "Avant le bain" brought $28; "La Source," $22 (afterwards sold for $14,000); "Une vue du Pont neuf" brought all of $60; Claude Monet's twenty pictures averaged from $40 to $60 each.

The writer was offered "Avant le bain" in 1894 for $1,200; it has since sold for $25,000. In a recent letter from M. George Durand-Ruel he says:

All the fine works of the Masters of the Modern French School have advanced very much in value. The "Portrait of the Charpentier Family," which is now in the Metropolitan Museum, was ordered from Renoir for three hundred francs; "La Source," also by Renoir,

was sold in a sale in 1878 for 110 francs. It has been since bought by the Prince de Wagram for 75,000 francs, and would be worth today double the amount. The "Port de Boulogne," by Manet, was bought from Manet by my father for 800 francs and sold to Faure, who later on sold it to Comte de Camondo for 70,000 francs. It would be worth today about 250,000 francs. "Le Déjeuner dans l'Atelier," which my father bought from Manet and which we had on exhibition at 389 Fifth Avenue in 1895, asking price at that time $7,000, was sold afterwards to M. Pellerin and bought two years ago for the Munich Museum for $60,000.

Daubigny was one of the few men who appreciated Monet; he bought his pictures and urged others to buy.

When he died in 1878 a sale of his effects was held. Duret says:

I knew the "Canal à Saardam," which seemed to me one of the most beautiful things Monet had painted; I made up my mind to go to the auction and try to buy it. The sale took place but the picture was not put up. I supposed that the heirs had decided to keep it as a work they understood and appreciated. One Sunday, fifteen days later, happening by chance in L'Hôtel Drouot I went into a room filled with unfinished works, old and grimy canvases, and a mass of stuff — in a word, all the worthless debris of a studio — and there at one side the "Canal à Saardam" of Claude Monet. . . . I inquired and learned that the room contained the scourings of Daubigny's studio, sent in for sale anonymously. It was there the heirs had sent the picture of Monet, excluding it from the regular sale because they thought it would bring discredit. It was knocked down to me at the auction for $16. In 1894, when my collection was sold, the picture was bought by M. Durand-Ruel for $1,100. In 1901 it was withdrawn from a sale at the price of $6,000.

The second exhibition was held in 1876 in the galleries of Durand-Ruel. In passing, tribute should be paid to this great dealer and remarkable man who backed his belief in the new men with all he possessed, to the jeopardizing of his business, and who, happily, still lives to enjoy the confirmation of his judgment.

Of this exhibition Albert Wolff, in "Figaro," said:

The Rue Peletier is unfortunate. Following upon the burning of the Opera House, a new disaster has fallen upon the quarter. There has just been opened at Durand-Ruel's an exhibition of what is said to be painting. The innocent passerby enters, and a cruel spectacle meets his terrified gaze. Here five or six lunatics, of whom one is a woman (Berthe Morisot) have chosen to exhibit their works. There are people who burst out into laughter in front of these objects. Personally I am saddened by them. These so-called artists style themselves Intransigeants, Impressionists. They take paint, brushes and canvases; they throw a few colors on to the canvas at random, and then they sign the lot. In the same way the inmates of a madhouse pick up the stones on the road and believe they have found diamonds.

All of which recalls what Ruskin said of Whistler, and the following choice bits about Turner.

They (referring to two of his famous pictures) "mean nothing. They are produced as if by throwing handfuls of white and blue and red at the canvas, letting what chanced to stick, stick, and then shadowing in some forms to make the appearance of a picture."

Another picture "only excites ridicule." "No. 353 caps all for absurdity, without even any of the redeeming qualities of the rest." . . . "the whole thing is truly ludicrous." *

Again of Turner,

"This gentleman has on former occasions chosen to paint with cream, or chocolate, yolk of egg, or currant jelly — there he uses his whole array of kitchen-stuff. . . . We cannot fancy the state of eye which will permit anyone cognizant of art to treat these rhapsodies as Lord Byron treated "Christabel;" neither can we believe in any future revolution which shall bring the world round to the opinion of the worshipper, if worshippers such frenzies still possess." †

In 1877 the Impressionists held their third exhibition, again in Durand-Ruel's galleries. This proved more audacious than the first.

* "Library Gazette," May 14, 1842, p. 331.
† "Athenaeum," May 14, 1842, p. 433.

"It gave rise to an extraordinary outburst of laughter, contempt, indignation, and disgust. It became a notable event in Parisian life. It was talked about in the cafés of the boulevards, in clubs, and in drawing rooms, as some remarkable phenomenon. Numbers of people went to see it. They were not attracted by any sort of artistic interest; they simply went in order to give themselves that unpleasant thrill which is produced by the sight of anything eccentric and extravagant. Hence there was much laughter and gesticulation on the part of the visitors. They went in a mood of hilarity; they began to laugh while still in the street; they laughed as they were going up the stairs; they were convulsed with laughter the first moment they cast their eyes upon the pictures."

A critic in "La Chronique" said:

They provoke laughter, and yet they are lamentable. They display the profoundest ignorance of drawing, of composition, and of color. When children amuse themselves with a box of colors and a piece of paper they do better.

Cézanne was the one among them who both now and for a long time afterwards excited the most detestation. It is not too much to say that he was regarded almost as something monstrous and inhuman.

After the close of the exhibition a sale was had at the Hotel Drouot.

"Forty-five canvases of Caillebotte, Pissarro, Sisley, and Renoir realized only $1,522 — an average of less than $34 each. The sale took place in the presence of an amused and contemptuous public, who received the pictures, as they were put up at auction, with groans. They amused themselves with passing several of them round from hand to hand, turned upside down."

Sixteen Renoirs brought $400. The next year "le Pont de Chateau" sold for $8, "Jeune fille dans un Jardin" for $6, and "La Femme au Chat" for $16.

Sisley sold eleven for 1,387 francs, or $25 each. These prices meant disaster and the painter was in great distress. In 1878 he wrote Theodore Duret a pathetic letter asking if Duret could not find some friend who would have enough confidence in his, Sisley's, future to pay $100 per month for six months and receive in return thirty pictures.

"At the expiration of six months, if he is not disposed to keep the thirty pictures, he can take the chances on a sale of twenty, get back the money he paid me, and have ten pictures left for nothing."

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During the New York Exhibition the Metropolitan Museum bought a Cézanne for something like $8,000. The price of a more important was $46,000. In the seventies in Paris there was a dealer in artists' materials called Pere Tanguy who had a little shop in rue de Navarin. In 1879 when Cézanne left Paris for the country he left his pictures for Pere Tanguy to sell. Duret went there to buy some. He found them stacked against the wall, piled according to their dimensions, the small ones $8 each, the large ones $20.

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This is an old, old story—the story of nearly every great artist of whom we have any knowledge.

The world seems to need perspective to appreciate a great man.

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We are prone to think the great men have just passed away; we do not realize that men just as great in one way or another are being born every day.

The great man usually differs from the ordinary man only in his *one* greatness. On many sides he may be a very commonplace man, a petty man, but on his great side he is so far

CEZANNE
Portrait of Self

CÉZANNE

out of the ordinary that it is almost impossible to understand him close to. The fact that he is doing things in an *extra*-ordinary way causes us instinctively to distrust and condemn him.

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One of the early buyers of Impressionist pictures was a distinguished Chicago woman, and her collection today contains some of the finest Monets, Renoirs, and Degases in existence. When her friends heard she had bought some forty or fifty Monets they shook their heads in dismay at such folly. This was not many years ago, less than thirty, and now the pictures are in demand the world over and worth ten, fifteen, twenty times what they cost.

The same ladies and gentlemen who shook their heads at the Monets in 1890 shook their heads at the Cubists in 1913. If they live another quarter of a century they will once more shake their heads at the new art of that day — for such is life.

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Neo-Impressionism was the logical outcome of Impressionism. It was simply the attempt to paint light in still more scientific fashion, by the use of the primary colors laid on in fine points in such a manner that at the proper distance the points fuse and produce the tone desired.

The use of small dabs or points of color instead of brush strokes gained for the movement the name "*Pointillism.*"

Neo-Impressionism was not a reaction from Impressionism but an attempt to advance still further the painting of light effects.

Seurat and Signac simply attempted to out-Monet Monet. They were the last word in Impressionism. After them the reaction — *Post-Impressionism,* something fundamentally different from and opposed to the very theory of Impressionism.

It is, perhaps, a national characteristic of the French to be intense on all they undertake, and if there is one quality common to the generation of painters who followed the earlier impressionists it is intensity. This earnest passionateness has produced developments in two main directions, towards more intense luminosity and towards more intense simplification. The first is exemplified in the work of *the Pointillists,* who carried it to its logical conclusion the division of tones, and built up their pictures with points or square touches of pure colour. Paul Signac, for example, is dazzling in his scientific presentment of the power of light. It is difficult to believe that luminosity can be carried further than in his radiant canvases whose force makes the most brilliant Turner appear pale and weak in comparison. Signac's method, it may be noted in passing, is a square touch of pure colour as opposed to the circular spots of Seurat, the inventor of Pointillism, Theo van Rysselberg, and the late Henri-Esmond Cross.

If Signac has reached the limit in intense luminosity, Henri Matisse, Otho Friesz, and André Derain, among others, stand for intense simplification. But it is still a little too early to deal with their astonishing works, and any one sincerely desirous of comprehending the aims of these revolutionary painters may be recommended to commence his course of initiation by a serious study of the works of Cézanne and Gauguin. These two deceased painters are to their younger comrades what Marx and Kropotkin are to the young social reformers of today.*

We are constantly led astray by words — at best they are imperfect instruments of thought.

As has been often noted in the literature of painting, all art is *impressionistic* in the broad and fine sense of the term. Hence to divide painters into Impressionists and Non-Impressionists involves a contradiction.

In painting his *purely imaginative* creations of light effects Turner was as much of an Impressionist as Monet in painting his *closely observed* light effects.

In painting his *ideal* peasants Millet yielded as freely to his impressions as did Manet in painting his bull-fighters.

From one point of view the difference is one of degree

* "Revolution in Art," by Frank Rutter, p. 17, 18.

rather than of kind, namely, the degree to which the painter lets his impressions *sink in* and become a part of him.

Monet attempted to paint light *exactly as he saw it,* reducing the personal equation—that is, himself—to the lowest possible significance. Turner painted light as he saw *and imagined* it; he allowed his impressions to sink in, to become a part of him, then he *created* a picture. And his pictures vary greatly in the proportion of observation to imagination; in some he painted almost as direct and as coldly from nature as Monet, in others he barely used his observations as groundwork upon which to let his imagination run riot.

It is not strange that so erratic, so eccentric a genius bewildered the public and the critics of his day, for in the painting of light he was a generation ahead of his time, and in the attempt to paint pure color harmonies he was two generations ahead.

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Take, for instance, his "Sunrise, with a Sea Monster," and "Sunrise, with Boat between Headlands," in the Tate Gallery. If these pictures had been hung anonymously in the International Exhibition in New York they would have excited more laughter than any of the Cubists. They are simply color schemes compared with which an "Improvisation" by Kandinsky is a legible message.

A Turner in the National or Tate Gallery is accepted as a masterpiece; the same picture hung anonymously with a lot of extreme Post-Impressionists in the Grafton Gallery would be the occasion of much hilarity.

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While all painting is more or less impressionistic, in the art literature of the day the term "Impressionists" is appropriated to the school of men who paint in the open direct from nature, and who attempt to record faithfully, many

almost mechanically, their visual impressions of objects and light-effects.

Hence the term *Post*-Impressionism means not an accentuation or a further development of Impressionism such as *Neo*-Impressionism or "pointillism," but a *reaction*.

When Impressionism has had its day and done its best, then something different must come, and logically that something different is a return to the art that is the antithesis of Impressionism — the art of the *imagination* — a *creative* art.*

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For a generation the poetic, the imaginative work of the Barbizon School — to use this one school as typical of the painting of practically the entire western world in the sixties and seventies — held sway.

Then came the return to nature, the Impressionists, and for a generation they held sway.

Now, apparently, we are at the beginning of a new movement, a return to imaginative art, and the evidences of this return are seen not only in painting but in decoration, in

* The interest expressed in much impressionist painting is only an interest of curiosity. The painter represents facts that he has only just noticed. He is like a clever journalist who makes an article out of his first observations of a new country. But the aim of the Post-Impressionist is to substitute the deeper and more lasting emotional interest for the interest of curiosity.

Like the great Chinese artists, they have tried to know thoroughly what they paint before they begin to paint it, and out of the fulness of their knowledge to choose only what has an emotional interest for them. Their representations have the brevity and concentrated force of the poet's descriptions. He does not go out into the country with a note-book and then versify all that he has observed. His descriptions are often empty of fact, just because he only tells us what is of emotional interest to himself and relevant to the subject of his poem; and they are justified, not by the information they convey, but by the emotion they communicate through the rhythm of sound and words. The Post-Impressionists try to represent as the poet describes. They try to give every picture an emotional subject-matter and to make all representation relevant to it.

"The Post-Impressionists," by A. Chilton-Brock, "Burlington Magazine," January, 1911.

sculpture, in music, in drama, in literature, in fiction, in philosophy, in medicine, in business, in politics.

There is a demand for *ideals* as distinguished from *results.*

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We have learned that the proper end of poetry is the expression of emotion, to which all reasoning and statement of fact should be subsidiary; but we have not learned that painting should have the same end, using representation only as a means to that end, and representing only those facts of reality which have emotional associations for the painter. In primitive pictures, it is true, we look for the expression of emotion rather than for illusion, and that is the reason why so many people get a real pleasure from primitive art. They judge it by the right standard, and ask of it what it offers to them. But from modern pictures they demand illusion — that is to say, the kind of representation they are used to; and when they do not get it they accuse the artist of incompetence.*

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In painting this reaction, this tendency — call it what you please — has taken many forms, one of which is *Cubism.*

While this book devotes much space to Cubism, it is solely because in its extreme development it serves admirably to illustrate a discussion of the philosophy of *Post-Impressionism* and not because there is any particular merit or strength in Cubism — as Cubism.

In a book like this, written as an off-hand comment upon what is now going on in the world of art — in the world generally, for that matter — it would be quite impracticable to follow the development of even the principal lines of human activity; † hence the works and theories of the Cubists have been chosen as typical of radical and revolutionary ideas and the attempt is made to find wherein these works and ideas are not so radical and extravagant as they seem, but

* "The Post-Impressionists," by A. Chilton-Brock, "Burlington Magazine," January, 1911.

† In another book, "The New Competition," the writer has attempted this in relation to business and economics.

are, in fact, only an illustration of what is going on in the minds of men generally.

If the painter who laughs at a Cubist painting and denounces it will only stop to think he will find one of two things true, he himself is either advancing in his art or he is not. If he is not, there is nothing further to be said, his attitude toward the Cubist painting is quite consistent; but if he is advancing, if his style, his technic, his point of view are changing, *however slightly,* from year to year, then he should be exceedingly cautious how he ridicules or condemns, for without knowing it he may be traveling the highroad, one of the interesting byways of which is Cubism.

Most painters of sixty who are now Impressionists and who ridicule Cubists, if cross-questioned would be obliged to confess that thirty-four years ago they ridiculed the men in whose footsteps they have since followed and whom they now recognize as masters.

Personally I care very little for Cubist pictures, and the theory—it is mostly *theory*—of Cubism no longer interests me. For years I have owned and lived with all the Cubist paintings reproduced in color in this book.

I bought them not because I understood or cared for them at the time, but simply to find out if they would prove *liveable* and *loveable* on intimate acquaintance. The most I can say is I *like* some of them, and some of them are exceedingly well painted, but that last is about the least one can say of a painting; technical achievement ought to go without saying. To me a picture, a poem, a play, a piece of music is *not art* unless it *moves* one, unless there is a purely *emotional reaction,* unless the contemplation or hearing yields a pleasure that cannot be described. Art is *felt,* not seen, not heard.

Cubism is very much in evidence, it made itself both *seen* and *heard,* but generally speaking it fails to make itself *felt.*

III

LES FAUVES

EVERY development bears within the seeds of its dissolution and the germs of its succession.

The seeds of the dissolution and the germs of the succession of Impressionism were *Les Fauves*—the Savages, the Wild Ones, as you please.

The philosophical student of the history of art has no trouble in tracing at any time the following currents:

A. The main stream which includes *all* art developments from the profoundest and most permanent to the most fleeting and superficial, from the soberest to the most extravagant.

B. B. +. Within the main current lesser currents of such magnitude that they frequently seem to dominate—and often do obscure the direction of—the main current; as, for instance, Impressionism dominated the art of France and influenced the art of the entire western world in the final years of the last century. These lesser currents have their effect on the main current, though their ultimate effect is never so revolutionary as their enthusiasts believe; the good in them is absorbed, the meretricious rejected.

C. C. C. +. Surface manifestations of all kinds, often so violent they disguise not only the main current, but the important subsidiary currents, and lead men to believe for the moment that art is reversing itself, that all that has been done is being undone, that chaos is taking the place of order. These subsidiary movements are with us always, evident in

every exhibition; they are the experiments, the extravagances of each generation, of each decade, of each year. Some of them contain so much of truth they develop into *B.*—larger currents—"movements;" others are of such ephemeral importance they cause their sensations of the hour and pass away, leaving behind scarce distinguishable traces.

It is these last movements which, because they are new and strange, so impress critics and public that observation loses its sense of proportion; the force of the main current (*A.*) is lost sight of, and the strength of subsidiary currents (*B. B.* +) is overlooked.

The newest movements (*C. C. C.* +) are usually either too bitterly denounced or too widely praised, their true relationship is not perceived; all sense of perspective is lost in the immediate presence of the startling.

There are no hard and fast lines dividing any of these currents and movements. When and where they begin no one can say; when and where they end no one can tell.

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Impressionism is identified with Monet more than any other painter, because all his life long he has been the steadfast and consistent exponent of extreme theories regarding the painting of light effects.

But Impressionism, even the painting of light effects, had its beginning long before Monet; with the beginning of painting itself, the germs were there.

Likewise the germs of every other movement, however extravagant and superficial, could probably be found in the work of some man or men in another age and country.

What happens is that a combination of favoring conditions at a given time concentrates human efforts and human attention upon a particular mode, technic, or theory and brings it to the fore.

The names of Turner, Manet, Whistler, have been cited as illustrations of geniuses so comprehensive they link several movements, several decades, together.

To these should be added the name of Degas in painting and that of Rodin in sculpture.

These men have done things far ahead of their own times, they have done things their own times not only did not understand, but ridiculed and decried. It was only a few years ago that Paris—yes, *Paris*—rejected Rodin's Balzac, by many considered the greatest of his works.

These men illustrate what we mean when we say that every period in art contains within itself the seeds of its dissolution and the germs of its succession. A movement may seem so dominating, so strong, so true, that people exclaim, "It is the final word, it will last forever," but at the very moment somewhere, in obscurity, there will be men doing things that are diametrically opposed to the prevaling current, things that are destined to be the masterpieces of a new development.

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Cézanne exhibited with the Impressionists in 1874 and was counted one of them; yet in a profound sense he was the first of the Post-Impressionists.

While he was classed with the Impressionists he had little in common with them, practically nothing in common with Monet.

All his life Monet has been busy with the *surface* of things; all his life Cézanne was busy with the *substance* of things.

When Monet paints a landscape he paints the grass and the flowers and the trees one sees bathed in sunlight; when Cézanne painted a landscape it was an elemental presentment of nature herself.

Cézanne was borne in Aix in 1839 and died in the same place in 1905.

Having inherited just sufficient to live very modestly, he devoted his entire life to trying to fathom the secrets of nature and paint her innermost truths.

The fact that his pictures did not sell, that even his friends did not understand him, did not swerve him a hair's breadth from the path he had chosen—to paint, to *learn how* to paint, *simpler* and *truer* interpretations.

He lived so isolated from his neighbors that a visitor to Aix in 1904 had great difficulty in finding his residence; was obliged, in fact, to resort to the list of voters at the town hall. In the eccentricities of his daily life he was not unlike Turner, but in his art he indulged no such brilliant fancies.

He was a *consistent* painter. He never permitted his imagination to run away with him; he constantly checked his work by the closest and most penetrating observation of nature.

His manner of work is described by a devoted follower:*

> He was working on a canvas showing three decapitated heads on an Oriental carpet. He had worked a month every morning from six o'clock until half past ten. His daily routine was, rise very early, paint in his studio from six to ten-thirty, breakfast, and go out immediately into the surrounding country to study nature until five. On his return he had supper and went at once to bed. I have seen him so exhausted by his day's work that he could neither talk nor listen.
>
> "What is lacking," he said to me while contemplating the three heads, "is the *realisation*. Perhaps I shall get it, but I am old and it may be that I shall die without having reached the highest point: To realise! like the Venetians."

Not unlike the lament of Hokusai at seventy over his imperfections as a draftsman.

* "Souvenirs Sur Paul Cézanne," by Emile Bernard, 1912.

CÉZANNE
Still Life

One's first impression from even half-tone reproductions of his paintings is a feeling of *construction.* I have before me a still-life—the fruit, the bowl, the piece of stuff are not simply painted but *built up* as firmly and scientifically as a builder builds a house—the materiality as well as the beauty is there.

It is just the same with his portraits, his figure pieces and his landscapes; one cannot escape the *sense of the substance,* the fundamental reality.

And to attain it all he used the simplest and most direct technic, not a brush-stroke, not a line, not a spot of color wasted.

Cézanne's pictures vary widely in merit. Many of the oils shown recently in New York (Winter of 1915-16) were very indifferent examples of his work. America is certain to be offered the *culls* of all these men's studios, and both buyers and dealers must be on their guard.

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With the name of Cézanne are associated the names of two men whose work shows his influence, VanGogh and Gauguin, and one whose work is wholly different, Henri Rousseau, the custom house employee who painted without instruction; later, but also conspicuously, Henri Matisse.

These are the leaders of Fauvism.

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At the exhibition in New York one had the unusual opportunity of seeing in close contact many works of all four. It would be difficult to imagine paintings more different in inspiration and technic. They had but one thing in common —a pronounced reaction from, not to say revolt against, Impressionism, evidenced particularly in the use of color *constructively* and *decoratively* rather than imitatively.

Color force is a feature of the new inspiration.

The painters of today have discovered anew the world's coloring. We now recognize everywhere the power and vivaciousness, the thousandfold freshness, and the infinite changefulness of color. To us colors now talk directly; they are not drowned by covering tints, not hide-bound by a preconceived harmony. An instrument has thus been given, wherein innumerable melodies still slumber.

Color is a means of representation not only of what is colored, but also of the thick and the thin; of the solid and the liquid; of the light and of the heavy; of the hard and of the soft; of the corporeal and of the spacious. Cézanne models with color; with tinted color surfaces he builds a landscape. The proper couching of colored planes can force upon us the impression of depth; colored transitions call forth the impression of ascent and of motion; spots scattered here and there give the impression of sprightly vivaciousness.

Color is a means of expression talking directly to the soul. Deep mourning and soft glowing, warmth of heart and cold clarity, confused dumbness, flames of passion, sweet devotion — all conditions and all outbursts of the soul — what can communicate them to us more forcefully and more directly than a few colors with their effect exerted through the eye? As tones draw us with them without our will and without meeting resistance, so does color subjugate us: now it fills us with deepest sorrow, then again we are all glowing under its influence.

Color is a means of composition. The force of sensuous designation, the expressive power of the soul, both must combine and make for an always new, always original, and always unique harmony. The law of color beauty has not as yet been fathomed by the intellect. It is being created by feeling and by subconscious experience.*

◈ ◈ ◈

"Cézanne, Gauguin, and VanGogh were men of very different minds; but they were alike in this, that they all attempted to subordinate representation to expression, and were all determined to express only their own emotional experience. Cézanne could not content himself with impressionist triumphs of representation. Above all, he revolted from the Impressionist insistence on the momentary aspect of reality. He was, so to speak, a kind of Plato among the

* "Das Neue Bild," Otto Fischer, 11-12. Several of the half-tone reproductions which we use are from this work on Munich art.

artists of his time, believing that in reality there is a permanent order, a design which reveals itself to the eye and mind of the artist, and which it is his business to expose in his work. But this design he was determined to discover in reality itself, not in the works of other artists. His task was enormously difficult because he would take nothing whatever at second hand. Nature must tell him all her own secrets; and he would not listen even to her when she told him commonplaces. He was not interested, so to speak, in her caprices, in her chance effects of beauty that anyone can see. He painted landscape as Titian or Rembrandt painted portraits; searching always for the permanent character of the place, for that which, independent of weather or time, distinguished it from other places. This permanent element he found in structure and mass, but, like Titian and Rembrandt, he would not abstract these from color. For him, as for these masters, structure and mass revealed themselves in color, and all these must be verified by incessant observation. . . . For him a hill is not a screen for the play of light; it is built up of earth and rock. Nor is a tree a mere rippling surface, but a living thing with the structure of its growth. Everywhere he looks for character; yet he subordinates the character of details to the character of the whole. And the character of the whole means for him its permanent character, which he expresses in a design not imposed upon it but discovered in it, as Michael Angelo discovered the statue in the block of marble.

"If Cézanne, Gauguin, and VanGogh were charlatans, they were like no other charlatans that ever lived. If their aim was notoriety, it is strange that they should have spent solitary lives of penury and toil. If they were incompetents, they were curiously intent upon the most difficult problems of their art. The kind of simplification which they attempted

is not easy, nor, if accomplished, does it make a picture look better than it is. The better their pictures are, the more they look as if any one could have painted them; in fact, they look just as easy as the lyrical poems of Wordsworth or Blake." *

For a glimpse of VanGogh's life and aspirations, see his letters published in English under the title, "Letters of a Post-Impressionist," written mostly to his brother — simple, pathetic documents, showing the eager, earnest striving of a man who finally went insane and shot himself. Critics and opponents of his work have seized upon his madness as proof of lack of sanity in what he painted — perhaps, but then is dullness the only proof positive of sanity?

Gauguin, half Breton, half Peruvian Creole, was a restless spirit.

"More than once he circumnavigated the globe, and all his life he was at recurring intervals a victim to wander-thirst. In early manhood he returned to Paris and made an heroic attempt to settle down. He entered a bank, and got on there very well.

"One day he saw in a dealer's shop some paintings which brought back memories of the light and color he had seen in the tropics. He sought out the painters Pissarro and Guillaumin, and began painting at the age of thirty. Two years later, in 1880, he exhibited two landscapes in the manner of Pissarro.

"Degas made the decisive impression on him, by his systematic division of large planes of color, and above all, by his strong drawing." †

* "The Post-Impressionists," by A. Chilton-Brock, "Burlington Magazine," January, 1911.
† "Revolution in Art," by Frank Rutter, p. 27.

VAN GOGH
Portrait of Self

"Gauguin was as singular in his way as VanGogh in his. He did not "go mad," but he withdrew from civilized society, buried himself in Tahiti and painted the natives, firmly convinced that only amidst primitive conditions could be found the inspiration of pure art.

"His combative disposition impelled him to fight against painters, critics, dealers, buyers, and against established institutions and conventions. One would say fate pursued him. In 1894 at Concarneau in a quarrel with some boatmen who had insulted him, his ankle was broken by a sabot kick, leaving a painful injury from which he suffered until his death (in 1903)." *

Of his aims he said in a letter to a friend:

> Physics, chemistry, and, above all, the study of nature, have produced an epoch of confusion in art, and it may be truly said that artists, robbed of all their savagery, have wandered into all kinds of paths in search of the productive element which they no longer possess. They now act only in disorderly groups, and are terrified as if lost when they find themselves alone. Solitude is not to be recommended to any one, for a man must have strength to bear it alone. All I have learnt from others has been an impediment to me. It is true that I know little, but what I do know is my own.
>
> Every human work is a revelation of the individual. Hence, there are two kinds of beauty; one comes from instinct, the other from labor. The union of the two — with the modification resulting therefrom — produces great and very complicated richness. . . . Raphael's great science does not for a moment prevent me from discovering the instinct of the beautiful in him as the essential quality.

In 1895 there was a sale of Gauguin's works at the Hotel Drouot. Strindberg was asked to write a preface to the catalogue. In declining, he admitted his own "immense yearning to become a savage and create a new world," but said of Gauguin's world, "it is too sunny for me, the lover of

* "Paul Gauguin," by Michael Puy, "L'Art Decoratif," April, 1911.

chiaroscuro. And in your Eden dwells an Eve, who is not my ideal — for indeed, I too, have a feminine ideal, or two."

Gauguin answered,

> Your civilization is your disease, my barbarism is my restoration to health. The Eve of your civilized conception makes us nearly all misogynists. The old Eve, who shocked you in my studio, will perhaps seem less odious to you some day. I have perhaps been unable to do more than suggest my world, which seems unreal to you. It is a far cry from the sketch to the realisation of the dream. But even the suggestion of the happiness is like a foretaste of Nirvana — only the Eve I have painted can stand naked before us. Yours would always be shameless in the natural state, and, if beautiful, the source of pain and evil.*

He had a profound admiration for Cézanne, and was often charged with imitating him, and in some of his pictures there is a certain resemblance in construction, but two painters could scarce be less alike in the handling of color. Gauguin handled color for the pure joy of it.† Cézanne used color as a mason uses bricks.

Gauguin's admiration for Cézanne was not reciprocated.

"Gauguin likes your work immensely, and imitates you," a friend once said to Cézanne.

"Eh! he does not understand me," was the angry response. "I never have and never will accept a lack of modelling or graduation; that is nonsense. Gauguin is not a painter; he produces simply Chinese figures."

Gauguin was a dreamer; Cézanne, in his way, was quite an exact thinker, for instance, he explained his ideas of form and color as follows:

* "Revolution in Art," by Frank Rutter, 32-33. Now that the great Swedish dramatist, and pessimist, is becoming known to the English-speaking world, these words of Gauguin's are singularly interesting — and just.

† See "Paul Gauguin," by Armand Seguin, "L'Occident," March, April, and May, 1903.

Everything in nature is modelled on the lines of the *sphere,* the *cone,* and the *cylinder,* and one must understand how to paint these simple figures, one can then paint anything. Design and color are not distinct; to precisely the extent that one paints, one draws; the more the color harmonizes, the clearer and purer the design. When the color is at its finest, the form also attains its perfection. Contrasts and harmonies of tones — that is the secret of drawing and modelling.*

In the suggestion of the lines of the *sphere,* the *cone,* and the *cylinder,* as the *elements* of all art, one recognizes the *alphabet of cubism.* But in reducing drawing to these elements Cézanne, without knowing it, simply repeated what Albert Durer printed in book form nearly four hundred years ago, and what the Chinese and Japanese had discovered centuries earlier.†

The fact that the work of four men so different, Cézanne, Henri Rousseau, VanGogh, Gauguin, began to be appreciated about the same time, shows how ripe the Paris art world was for the reaction from Impressionism — for a great movement in *creative* and *decorative* art.

◈ ◈ ◈

Matisse taught drawing and for a time — from 1895 to 1899 — painted along conventional lines. Influenced by Cézanne he then broke with the academic and sought new light effects, effects quite different from those of the Impressionists.

He sought to break with all ancient laws, and his use of color became and still is largely his own.‡

While his coloring is always interesting and his drawing facile, there is at times something about his work that is not satisfying, an atmosphere of superficiality. He is described,

* "Souvenirs of Paul Cézanne," by Emile Bernard, p. 36.

† See "Laws of Japanese Painting," Henry P. Bowie, by long odds the best book in English on the subject.

‡ See "La Jeune Peinture Francaise," pas. André Salmon, pp. 18, 19.

however, by those who know him as a painter of almost bourgeois earnestness and sincerity, taking himself and his work most seriously.

At the same time many of his canvasses give the impression of having been executed in a spirit of sheer audacity.

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To be sure, there is a rhythm and swing to some of his moving figures that is delightful, delightful in the elemental simplicity of the drawing and the seemingly—but only seemingly—naive coloring.

Yet even with these canvases there is often the feeling, "With so much skill, why did he not do better?"—a feeling of disappointment, of dissatisfaction.

One is disposed to agree with the opinion that Matisse's "true gifts are those of address, of *souplesse,* of quick assimilation, of limited but easily acquired knowledge—essentially feminine gifts." *

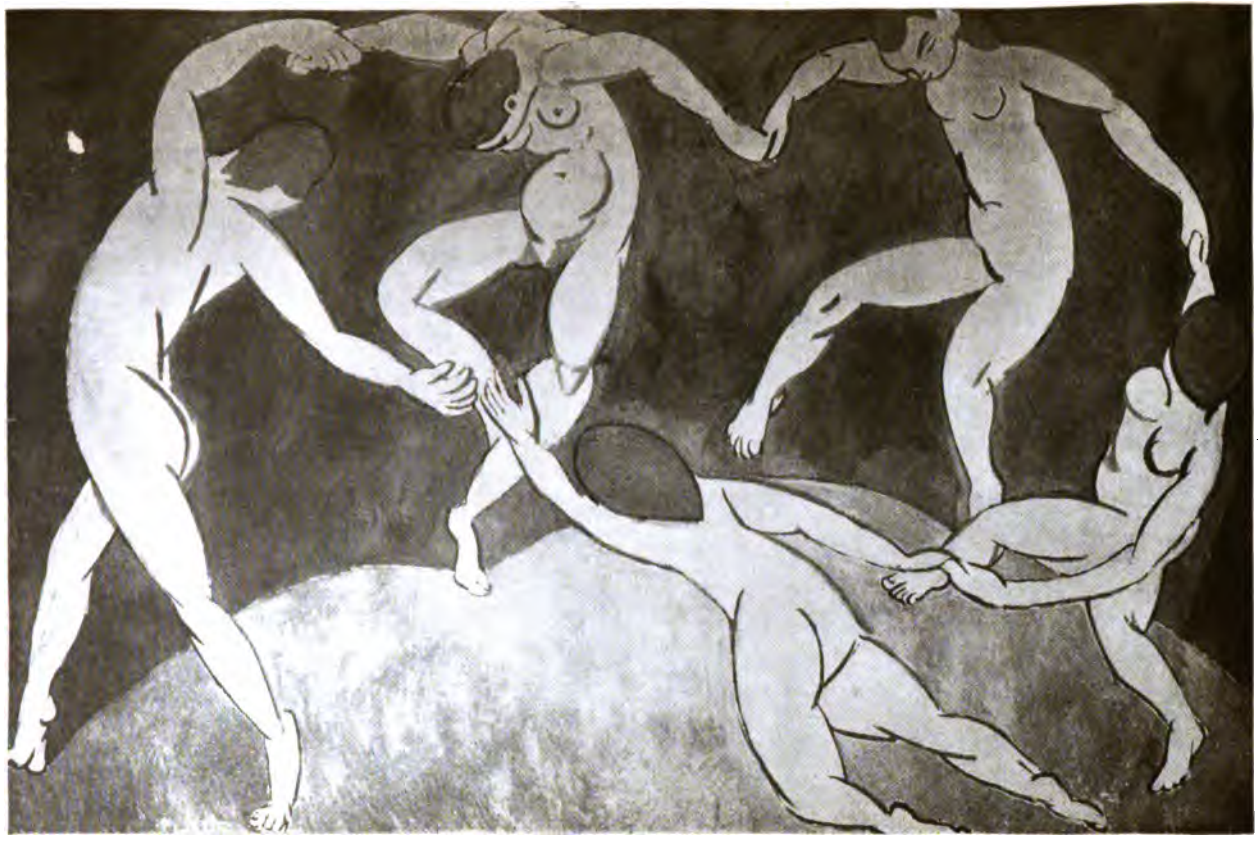
"On a beaucoup vante le gout d'Henri Matisse. Il n'est pas neable, mais d'une qualité secondairé. C'est le gout d'une modiste; son amour de la conteur vaut un amour du chiffon."

He lives in a simple country house in a suburb out of Paris. His studio is painted white, within and without, with immense windows.*

I found not a long-haired, slovenly-dressed, eccentric man, as I had imagined, but a fresh, healthy, robust, blonde gentleman, who looked even more German than French, and whose simple and unaffected cordiality put me directly at my ease.

Concerning his early experiences, Matisse said: "I began at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. When I opened my studio, years after, for some time I painted just like any one else. But things did n't go at all, and I was very unhappy. Then, little by little, I began to paint as I felt. One cannot do successful work which has much feeling unless one sees the subject very simply, and one must do this in order to express one's self as clearly as possible.

* "La Jeune Peinture Francaise," André Salmon, p. 19.



MATISSE
The Dance

"I studied in the schools mornings, and I copied at the Louvre in the afternoons for ten years. I made copies for the Government, but when I introduced some of my own emotional impressions, or personal translations of the pictures, the Government did not care to buy; it only wanted a photographic copy."

Of his present methods he said: "I certainly do think of harmony and color, and of composition, too. Drawing is for me the art of being able to express myself with line. When an artist or student draws a nude figure with painstaking care, the result is drawing, and not emotion. A true artist cannot see color which is not harmonious. Otherwise it is a *moyen,* or recipe. An artist should express his feeling with the harmony or idea of color which he possesses naturally. He should not copy the walls, or objects on a table, but he should, above all, express a vision of color, the harmony of which corresponds to his feeling. And, above all, one must be honest with one's self.

"If one *feels no emotion,* one should not paint. When I came in here to work this morning I had no emotion, so I took a horseback ride. When I returned I felt like painting, and had all the emotion I wanted.

"I never use pastels or water colors, and I only make studies from models, not to use in a picture — *mais pour me nourrir* — to strengthen my knowledge; and I never work from a previous sketch or study, but from memory. I now draw with feeling, and not anatomically. I know how to draw correctly, having studied form so long.

"I always use a preliminary canvas the same size for a sketch as for a finished picture, and I always begin with color. With large canvases this is more fatiguing, but more logical. I may have the same sentiment I obtained in the first, but this lacks solidity, and a decorative sense. I never retouch a sketch; I take a new canvas the same size, as I may change the composition somewhat. But I always strive to give the same *feeling,* while carrying it on further. A picture should, for me, always be decorative. While working *I never try to think, only to feel.*

"I have a class of sixty pupils and make them draw accurately, as a student always should do at the beginning. I do not encourage them to work as I do now."

When asked about a clay model of a nude woman with abnormal legs, he picked up a small Javanese statue with a head all out of proportion to the body and asked:

"Is not that beautiful?"

His interviewer answered, "I see no beauty where there is lack

of proportion. To my mind no sculpture has ever equaled that of the Greeks, unless it be Michael Angelo's."

He replied: "But there you are, back to the classic, the formal. We of today are trying to express ourselves *today — now* — the *twentieth century* — and not to copy what the Greeks saw and felt in art over two thousand years ago. The Greek sculptors always followed a set, fixed form, and never showed any sentiment. The very early Greeks and the Primitives only worked from the basis of emotion, but this grew cold, and disappeared in the following centuries. It makes no difference what are the proportions, *if there is feeling.* And if the sculptor who modeled this makes me think only of a dwarf, then he has failed to express the beauty which should overpower all lack of proportion, and this is only done through or by means of his emotions.

"My favorite masters are Goya, Durer, Rembrandt, Corot, and Manet. I often go to the Louvre, and there I study Chardin's work more than any other; I go there to study his technic."

His palette was a large one, and so chaotic and disorderly were the vivid colors on it that a close resemblance could be traced to some of his pictures.

"I never mix much; I use small brushes and never more than twelve colors. I use black to cool the blue.

"I seldom paint portraits; and, if I do, only in a decorative manner. I can see them in no other way."

One's ideas of the man and of his work are entirely opposed to each other: The latter abnormal to the last degree, and the man an ordinary, healthy individual, such as one meets by the dozen every day. On this point Matisse showed some emotion.

"Oh, do tell the American people that I am a normal man; that I am a devoted husband and father; that I have three fine children; that I go to the theater, ride horseback, have a comfortable home, a fine garden that I love, flowers, etc., just like any man."

As if to bear out this description of himself, he took me to the salon in his perfectly normal house, to see a normal copy which he had made at the Louvre, and he bade me good-by and invited me to call again like a perfectly normal gentleman.*

Matisse differs from Cézanne, VanGogh, Gauguin, in the accentuation of *feeling* as distinguished from observation. While the three last named sought fresh inspiration from

* From an article and interview by C. T. MacChesney, printed in the "New York Times," March 9, 1913.

close and ever closer contact with nature, he seeks his inspiration in his own emotions.

It is this trait that makes him one of the leaders of Post-Impressionism, as well as a Fauve.

From the foregoing it is clear that *Fauvism* does not mean a particular mode or technic, like Classicism, Romanticism, Realism, Impressionism, etc., etc. It means a *mood* rather than a *mode*. Every painter in revolt against prevailing taste and standards was and is a *Fauve*.

Not all Post-Impressionists are Fauves, but many are so called, for instance, the following:*

Odillon Redon, Othon Friez, Picasso (the founder of Cubism), Van Dongen, André Derain, Vlaminck, Marquet, George Braque, Raoul Dufy, Robert Delauney, M'lle Laurencin, Jean Metzinger, Pierre Girieud, Verhoeven.

Of the above four are well known Cubists; Redon is a poetic personality quite apart; while the others exhibit marked individualities in their work.

Les Fauves in Germany are "Die Wilden," embracing the "Brucke" of Dresden, the "Neue Sezession" of Berlin, the "Neue Vereinigung" of Munich.†

Those of Russia are Larionoff, P. Kuznezoff, Sarjan, Denissow, Kantsch, Schalowsky, Maschkoff, Frau Gontscharof, von Wisen, W. and D. Burljuk, Kanabe, Jakulof; and others who live in foreign countries, such as Schereczowa, Paris; Kandinsky Werefkina, Jawlensky, Bechteyeff, Genin in Munich.‡

Among the best known English artists who may fairly be classed as "Fauves" are Ferguson, Peploe, Wyndham

* See "Le Jeune Peinture Francaise," André Salmon, 1912.
† "Der Blaue Reiter," p. 5.
‡ See "Der Blaue Reiter," pp. 17, 18.

Lewis, Duncan Grant, Mrs. Bell, F. Etchells, Miss Etchells, Estelle Rice, Eric Gill, S. F. Gore, and a man who has done heroic service for the new movement, Roger Fry.

There are, however, comparatively speaking, so few "Fauves" in England that the guns of the critics rust on the racks; while in America they are so scattered they have as yet attracted no attention by concerted action.

Almost the only man in this country who persistently painted in modern fashion prior to the International was Arthur Dove, one of whose pictures is reproduced.

When asked how he came to paint as he does Dove said:

> After having come to the conclusion that there were a few principles existent in all good art from the earliest examples we have, through the Masters to the present, I set about it to analyze these principles as they are found in works of art and in nature.
>
> One of these principles which seemed most evident was the choice of the simple motif. This same law held in nature, a few forms and a few colors sufficed for the creation of an object.
>
> Consequently I gave up my more disorderly methods (impressionism); in other words, I gave up trying to express an idea by stating innumerable little facts, the statement of facts having no more to do with the art of painting than statistics with literature.

He then refers to "that perfect sense of order which exists in the early Chinese painting," and goes on:

> The first step was to choose from nature a motif in color, and with that motif to paint from nature, the form still being objective.
>
> The second step was to apply this same principle to form, the actual dependence upon the object (literal to representation) disappearing, and the means of expression becoming purely subjective.
>
> After working for sometime in this way, I no longer observed in the old way, and not only began to think *subjectively,* but also to remember certain sensations *purely through their form and color,* that is by certain shapes, planes, light, or character lines determined by the meeting of such planes.
>
> With the introduction of the line motif the expression grew more plastic, and the struggle with the means became less evident.

Referring to the painting reproduced he said:

It is a choice of three colors, red, yellow, and green, and three forms selected from trees and the spaces between them that to me were expressive of the movement of the thing which I felt.

As to going further and explaining what I felt, that would be quite as stupid as to play on an instrument before deaf persons. The deaf person is simply not sensitive to sound and cannot appreciate; and a person who is not sensitive to form and color as such would be quite as helpless.

The majority of people seem to be in the position of deaf persons. They see others listening intently, and apparently enjoying something, and because they fail to hear, they at once draw the false conclusion that the trouble is with the instrument or the performers.

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Four years have elapsed since the foregoing was written.

England, true to traditions, is still conservative; there the progress of the new movement may be *sure,* it is certainly exceedingly *slow.*

Not so in America as is amply shown by the many exhibitions held throughout the country.

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In New York the interest in the new work is so keen that conservative dealers have been forced to hold exhibitions; as one expressed it, "The public wont come to see any other pictures."

While the interest may be simply that of curiosity with the great majority of visitors, there is an increasing minority whose appreciation is sympathetic and intelligent.

In the summer of 1915 the Chicago Art Institute devoted a gallery to a loan exhibition of twenty-five paintings by Albert Bloch, all of which were afterwards taken to the St. Louis Municipal Art Museum for two months.

Other cities, notably Buffalo and Milwaukee, have shown the new art.

IV

A FUTILE PROTEST

THE Cubist pictures in the Salon d'Automne, 1912, was the occasion of the following letter from M. Lempué, painter and doyen du Conseil municipal de la Ville de Paris, addressed M. Bérard, Sous-Secrétaire d'Etat des Beaux-Arts.*

If the voice of a municipal counsellor could reach you, I would beg you, would pray you to go and take a turn around the Autumn Salon.

Go there, sir, and although you are a minister, I trust that you will come away as much disgusted as are many people whom I know, and I hope, also, that you will say to yourself in an undertone: "Have I indeed the right to loan a public building to a lot of malefactors who conduct themselves in the world of art as do the *apaches* in ordinary life?"

You will ask yourself, Mr. Minister, in leaving the place, if nature and the human form have ever before suffered such outrages; you will admit with regret that in this Salon the most trivial uglinesses and vulgarities that can be imagined are there displayed and accumulated; and you will again ask yourself, Mr. Minister, if the dignity of the Government of which you form part is not injured, inasmuch as it appears to take under its protection such a scandal by sheltering horrors like these in a national building.

The Government of the Republic, as it seems to me, ought to be more careful and more respectful of the artistic dignity of France.

A year ago, and for another reason, I wrote to your predecessor, who, by the way, took no notice of my letter; but what is astonishing — does he not let everybody think that he is a meridional, whereas he was born nowhere else than at Montmartre?

A friend whispers to me that you are from Orthez; we are, therefore, fellow-townsmen, for that is almost as if you came from Montrejeau; so then, "Dious bibant!" (Dieu vivant!) it will not be long before you will make known to the Belgian, Frantz Jourdain, who has very modestly set for himself the mission of reforming French art, and who, in order to thoroughly demonstrate his ability to do

* "L'Art Decoratif," Nov. 1912.

so, has deposited — I will not say offal — but the store of "La Samaritaine" almost opposite the Louvre, which fact is a sure proof of the superiority of his monstrosity of a structure over the beautiful architecture of the Renaissance. Please, therefore, make known to this architect that in the future he may locate his reforms and his reformers where he pleases, but not again in a public building, and for so doing, all those who have taste and love for beautiful things will applaud you.

Please accept, Mr. Minister, the assurance of my highest regards.

Lempué.

The Committee of the Autumn Salon, in reply, made the following statement:

The committee of the Autumn Salon considers that the only reply which it can make to the especially severe attacks that have been made on it this year is to make announcement of the principle that directs it:

"To admit all efforts of conscientious art, whatever they may be, however personal, and however strange they may seem to the ancient formulae."

The Autumn Salon is not and does not wish to be the conservator of a school with a fixed formula; it wishes, rather, to remain the ground of generous combat and of the emulation necessary in a country like ours, in order to bring out and fructify both artists and works of art.

The Government, whose rôle is not to direct, but to encourage the artistic effort of the nation, can consider only in the most kindly way a Salon which has been the first to give reception to many artists now celebrated, which has given a place hitherto unknown to decorative art, and which, before all other expositions, has placed music and literature on a par with painting and sculpture.

Then the newspapers published the following item of news:

M. J. L. Breton, deputy from Cherbourg, proposes to put to the Assistant-Secretary of State for the Beaux Arts, in the course of the next discussion of his budget, a question regarding the "scandal" of the Autumn Salon, and to ask him not to allow the use of the

Grand Palais for such manifestations, which discredit French art in our national palaces.

This is the question which was put to the consulting commission charged with giving its advice regarding the multiple concessions for the Grand Palais in 1913.

M. Pascal, of the Institute, who presented the question, concluded unfavorably. After a long and lively discussion, the commission ranged itself by a large majority on the side of the proponent.

Let us recall the protests that have been addressed to the Autumn Salon. They were the subject, a few weeks ago, of a letter from Mr. Lampué, dean of the municipal council, who protested against the invasion of *cubism* into the galleries of the palace of expositions.

It is now up to M. Léon Bérard, Assistant-Secretary of State for the Beaux Arts, to take final action.

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On varnishing day, Mr. Gabriel Mourey wrote in the Journal:

"What a pity it is that there is no law permitting the taking of legal action against painters who cultivate hatred of beauty in the public mind. These painters are the advance-guard artists and the Cubists." M. Mourey neglected to tell us if the legal action which he proposes to us would be civil or penal. In our opinion, it would be necessary to make a distinction: The rich painters might be condemned to pay a penalty, and, so that the Government might not be liable to lose its rights where there is nothing, the poor painters might be hung up high and short.

Oh, tolerance! oh, progress! oh, the twentieth century!

In connection with the controversy "L'Art Decoratif" quoted the following letter from Boucher to his pupil Fragonard: "My dear Fragonard: You are going to see in Italy the works of Raphael, Michael Angelo, and their imitators; I say to you in confidence and as a friend, *if you take these people seriously you are lost.*"

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Not the least interesting and amusing feature of the lively article from which the above extracts are taken is its own denunciation of the cubists *en bloc*.

WEREFKIN
The Country Road

BECHTEJEFF
Fight of the Amazons

It resolutely assails the more orthodox critics for what they say about all the moderns *it likes* and then it echoes their language in its own condemnation of a body of men who are striving earnestly in their way to do things.

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"Oh! tolerance, oh! progress!
Oh! twentieth century!"

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One has only to group the conflicting opinions of great painters and critics to see how much depends upon the point of view and the personal equation.

To say certain pictures are worthless is a matter of individual taste and judgment; they may be worthless to me and not to you, just as clothes one man likes another would refuse to wear.

But to say a school or a movement, irrespective of particular works, is a worthless movement involves not one's taste but one's philosophy of life; it involves the proposition that a movement in art that challenges the attention of the art-world *is so devoid of force of any kind* that it is unworthy attention—an obvious contradiction.

Cubism has produced a lot of inane, uninteresting, and ugly pictures, pictures hopelessly bad in both line and color, but it has also produced pictures that are fine in line and color; but whether a particular picture is good or bad is of no importance whatsoever in comparison with the larger and more vital question:

What is the relation of Cubism to the art of today and tomorrow?

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When the *Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts* was founded in 1890 in a spirit of revolt against the old Salon *Société des*

Artistes Français—which dates its expositions from 1673—the schism was complete and the movement was denounced as revolutionary. The art world was divided into two bitterly hostile camps. The two Salons seemed absolutely irreconcilable.

Now they exhibit side by side in practically the same building. The visitor can stand in the main gallery of the one and gaze into the galleries of the other. The only distinctions are separate catalogues and an extra charge of a franc or two if you wish to pass from the one to the other.

Passing from the old Salon to the newer, one still has—to a slight degree—the feeling of passing from older and more conservative pictures to a newer, lighter, and somewhat more modern collection. And there is a difference but it is so slight that casual visitors do not notice it. In fact nine out of ten who visit the two Salons would think they were in but one exhibition, selected and arranged by the same committee, were it not for the additional fee and the two catalogues.

There is no reason today why the two Salons should not coalesce and make one exhibition.

In less than twenty-five years the older has absorbed much of what was good in the revolutionary force of the younger, and so much of the revolutionary enthusiasm of the younger has subsided that the members of the new *Société* fight side by side with the members of the old *against the two more radical exhibitions,* the *Salon d'Automne,* organized in 1903, and the *Société des Artistes Independents,* organized in 1884.

In time the Salon d'Automne will become quite as conservative as the two older Salons and there will be no reason why it should not exhibit and coalesce with the older.

What is happening in Paris has happened in Munich. The Munich Secessionists, once denounced as aesthetic anarchists, have so far subsided that they exhibit with the academic painters, retaining a faint show of identity by having the word "Secessionist" over the doors of the few rooms they fill.

The old Secession having subsided, the "Neue Sezession" has been organized by "Die Wilden" of Munich and that is now rampant; in ten or twenty years *it* will be absorbed in the main stream and a still *newer* secession challenge attention — and so on to the end of progress, for progress depends upon new and newer and ever newer departures. Already there is a division in the New Secession; the "Blue Riders" have withdrawn.

Months after the above was written the London correspondent of the "Chicago Tribune" — Nov. 2, 1913 — wrote as follows about the post-impressionist exhibition in the Grafton Galleries:

Many of the pictures which would have provoked happy laughter three years ago now look quite ordinary. The public is inured to them as much as it is inured to Whistler or Degas, and in a little time some of them will be dealers' pictures, just like the works of the Barbizon school.

There is, for instance, nothing extraordinary about the "Interior of a Café," by VanGogh, except its quiet excellence. It is all seen as justly and yea as newly as a character in one of Tolstoi's novels. One feels that any one could have painted it who had had the luck to see it so.

The "Boats at Anchor," also by VanGogh, is merely a sound but not very interesting impressionist picture, and his flower piece is even academic in a delightful way. Cézanne's "Boys Bathing" is one of those works on which the art of modern painters like M. Friesz is based.

It looks like a representation of something seen instantaneously, and yet at the same time it is all designed like a work of Nicholas Poussin's.

M. Matisse's "Joaquina" is timidly skied, but it is not in the least infuriating, like his famous gentleman in pajamas. Indeed, his method here justifies itself at first sight, for by no other means, one feels, could he have expressed the vitality of his sitter so simply and intensely.

M. Friesz's "Garden at Coimbra" is one of the pictures that would have astonished us all three or four years ago, but which now looks only pleasant and simple. So are the works of M. Marquet and M. Doucet, and even M. Herbin no longer seems a bad joker. The "Polka" and "Waltz" of Mr. Severini, the futurist, are quite agreeable to the eye, if it refuses to allow itself to be puzzled by the mind; but, if futurist paintings can be academic, they are a little academic, or at least systematic. One feels that any one could be taught to do them pretty well in a studio.

Among the water colors there are some pleasant works by M. Doucet and some remarkable experiments by M. Pechstein. The color prints of M. Manzana are more Chinese than Japanese in spirit, especially the print of horses; and the lithographs of M. Matisse may help some earnest beginners to see some merit in his painting. At any rate, any one who looks at them must see that he can draw.

The exhibition contains a good deal of rubbish, but far less than most exhibitions of what is considered orthodox art.

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The Salon d'Independants tends to remain radical notwithstanding it was founded so long ago as 1884 because it has but one article in its creed, "*the suppression of juries of admission and permission to artists to exhibit freely their works to the judgment of the public.*"

By paying five dollars any artist—real or supposed—is entitled to so much space and can fill that space with such pictures as he pleases, irrespective of their merit.

As a result, each exhibition contains original, revolutionary and radical work mixed with an immense amount of painting and sculpture that is hopelessly bad and some positively objectionable.

The continued vitality of the Independent Salon is due to the fact it has no officials or committees to control its exhibitions and check the appearance of radical work.

VAN GOGH
Café

The three other Salons grow conservative in the natural ageing of their management; they start with all the enthusiasm of youth but as both members and officers get older they tend to monopolize much of the available space for themselves and, naturally, they admit only those newcomers whose work does not detract or distract from their own. That is the history of the Royal Academy in London, of the National Academy in New York, and of every organization *the management of which has the right to hang their own and reject the works of others.*

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In the development of art *all* these exhibitions have their values. They are not unlike an army in a campaign, with its scouts, its skirmishers, its advance guard, and its more slowly moving main body — in the end it is the main body that does the most work.

The *value* of every *new* movement lies in the possibility of its ultimately *contributing* something to the mass, *not* in the possibility of its *destroying* what has been done.

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One has but to recall that both Whistler and Manet — to mention no others — were obliged to exhibit in the Salon des Refuses of their day to realize that an *independent* salon has its place in the art world quite as important as an official; in fact, wherever there is an *official* exhibition there should be an *un*-official, or independent, as a natural complement, otherwise the opportunity of the public to see *for itself* is limited by official discretion.

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For instance, it is the rule of the National Academy in New York that every member and associate has *the right* to hang a picture irrespective of its merits. As the space is limited the chance for new men is small indeed.

Furthermore it is the older men who pass upon the works of the newer and naturally they feel an instinctive aversion to paintings that clash with or distract attention from their own, hence the more radical, the more novel, the more interesting the picture the less chance it has of being accepted. This is both a fault and a virtue in the Academy—the fault and the virtue of extreme conservatism.

To correct the fault other exhibitions, held under freer conditions, are absolutely necessary not only to the progress of artists, young and old, but to stimulate interest in the public, to make the public feel that *it* is something more than a passive spectator with nothing to say, but on the contrary *its sympathetic cooperation* and *final verdict* of approval are desired.

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Nothing is more deadly to the art of a country than a single annual official exhibition such, for instance, as that of the Royal Academy in London, or the old Salon as it was thirty years ago in Paris.

The interest of the public is not aroused. The official selection is accepted as a matter of course. What is in the exhibitions is supposed to be good, what is not accepted is supposed to be bad.

As a result, the really good pictures in such exhibitions are not appreciated at their true value, while the poor are bought simply because they are there.

The truth is it requires the new salons, the independent exhibitions to give vitality to the old, to teach the public to appreciate the good in the old.

Good art, like everything else good, springs from controversy, *from the assertion of the individual,* from the mighty struggle of every sincere and enthusiastic man to convince

the world that *he* is right and that *his* works and ways are better than those of all other men.

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That is just what the new men are striving to do now—each is trying to convince the world *he* is right, that *his* methods, *his* departures, *his* theories are true.

The Cubist does not admit much of value in the Futurist, while the latter sees nothing at all in Cubism. In short the "isms" are more at war among themselves than with the older schools.

Out of the seething conflict of forces good is sure to come; the amount of good depending directly upon the sharpness of the conflict.

V

WHAT IS CUBISM?

WHAT is "Cubism"?

One more name added to the long roll of "movements" in art. Within the memory of living men we have had "Classicists," "Romanticists," "Idealists," "Naturalists," "Realists," "Pre-Raphaelites," and many more.

Today we have the "Neo-Impressionists," the "Pointilists," the "Luminists," the "Futurists," the "Orphists," the "Sensationalists," the "Compositionalists," the "Synchromists," the "Cubists"— tomorrow? *

New and ever new departures, experiments, achievements.

All of which goes to prove that art is living, for the sign of life is flux.

The innovation of today is the conventional of tomorrow.

Because the names of Rembrandt and Hals are now household words in art we are quick to assume their pictures were always considered great. Not so.

Just now it is a fad of millionaires to own Rembrandts, consequently he is over-appreciated and ridiculously overpriced.

The bare thought of the scorn that greeted Wagner's operas, the poems of Browning, and Whitman, sends a cold

* Many of these so-called movements such as "Orphists," "Synchromists," etc., are mere flashes-in-the-pan. Two or three young fellows who have more audacity than either imagination or technical ability secure space, hang a lot of poorly painted, meaningless canvasses and coin for themselves a name. They make their little splurge and are forgotten. But it is this sort of thing that mystifies the public and tends to bring the modern movement into disrepute.

METZINGER
The Taster

LEGER
The Chimneys

chill down our backs, makes us pause in our headlong criticism lest we, too, pillory ourselves.

Violent judgments are good fun, but they often come back to plague us. Of Wagner's "Meistersinger" Ruskin said:

> Of all the bête, clumsy, blundering, boggling, baboon-headed stuff I ever saw on a human stage that thing last night — as far as the story and acting went — and of all the affected, sapless, soulless, beginningless, endless, topless, bottomless, topsiturviest, tuneless, scrannelpipiest, tongs and boniest doggerel of sounds I ever endured the deadliness of, that eternity of nothing was the deadliest as far as its sound went. I never was so relieved, so far as I can remember, in my life by the stopping of any sound, not excepting railroad whistles, as I was by the cessation of the cobbler's bellowing; even the serenader's caricatured twangle was a rest after. As for the great "Lied," I never made out where it began or where it ended except by the fellow's coming off the horse block.

From which the inference is not unwarranted that Wagner did not please Ruskin!

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Opposed to all movements in art and life is the *academic* mind, fed on learning, steeped in tradition, hence conservative.

The term is not here used in a reproachful sense; on the contrary, the philosopher lays stress upon the value of the academic in progress; it is the element that preserves; it is the mass upon which humanity rests; it is the old and stable; it is the past upon which the future is built; it is the essential groundwork of new thought and new effort.

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The life of the individual passes from the enthusiasms, the radicalisms of youth to the serene and self-satisfied outlook of old age which instinctively opposes novelty and change — the academic attitude.

Youth makes friends with every chance acquaintance, age shuns the strange.

We are all Impressionists and Futurists at some times in our lives, but we tend to petrify. Sclerosis of the *arteries* is bad, but nothing compared with sclerosis of the *emotions*. We not only tend to become petrified as we grow older, but even in our youth we have our petrified sides, our hard spots.

However progressive we may be in certain directions we are sure to be stubbornly conservative in others.

The man who laughs at a cubist picture may be a cubist—that is, an innovator—in his profession or business.

The man who is a conservative in religion may be a radical in politics, and *vice versa*. As a matter of fact most of the followers of Lloyd George in England are the greatest sticklers for the inerrancy and the literal interpretation of the Scriptures, while most of the hide-bound conservatives are exceedingly tolerant toward "modernism" and "higher criticism" in the church.

So it goes. The merchant or manufacturer, the doctor or lawyer who is up to date in business or profession, who is keenly receptive toward the latest and most revolutionary methods, inventions, discoveries in *his* profession, may be—usually is—a hopeless reactionary toward other lines of human endeavor, a hopeless conservative when it comes, for instance, to looking at pictures.

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Now and then one meets a man so sympathetically observant and receptive that, like a good rubber ball, he is resilient at all points of contact. But for the most part we are like defective balls, resilient only in spots, and, like rubber, we become less and less resilient with age.

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Happy the man or woman who retains until late in life the power to react to new impressions and to experience new emotions.

The trouble with most of us is that even when we do react to new impressions and experience new emotions we are afraid to admit it. If any one of us, while alone in a museum, happened to run across a strange painting or a strange piece of sculpture—say a Javanese or a cubist production—we would not burst out laughing any more than we would laugh at some of the archaic sculptures and primitive works that are found in every great collection. On the contrary, we would probably study it with good healthy curiosity. But when the crowd is about we are afraid to express our curiosity, we are afraid to be honestly and genuinely interested, so we take refuge in laughter, it is so much easier to mask our ignorance with ridicule than confess it by frankly asking for information.

The man who does not understand a play or a book always condemns it.

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It would not be difficult to pick out among one's business acquaintances those who are conservative, that is, academic, and those who are inventive, speculative, venturesome, and so on to the "wild enthusiasts," "crazy fellows," who are always doing the unexpected; failing often but sometimes succeeding so brilliantly the world follows in their footsteps.

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There is nothing strange about the Cubists—except their pictures. Their pictures strike us as strange because we do not understand them, but if they were simply trying to do what thousands of inventors are trying to do the world over, namely, devise something new to meet the needs of mankind we would laugh at them no more than—and just as much as—the world laughed at the Wright brothers when they were working on the flying machine.

There are romanticists, realists, impressionists, futurists, cubists, in the theater.

The romantic play is an old, but still delightful story. We have had realism on the stage so long it has become almost academic. Just now there is coming from the Scandinavian countries and from Germany and Russia a form of dramatic representation that is essentially Cubist, Futurist, and Orphist in its expression.*

This ferment of new ideas is very disturbing to men who are afraid of change, who favor things as they are, who like to go to bed at the same hour and get up at the same hour, to do today what they did yesterday. But the new ideas will not down; they are constantly breaking out in unexpected places and while they may seem to be different ideas when expressed in music, painting, sculpture, poetry, architecture, from those expressed in science, religion, politics, social reform, and business generally, they are not; they are all fundamentally the same, namely, they are the ideas of a progress so rapid and radical it may be revolutionary and in a measure destructive.

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In the very nature of things it is not given to many men to be receptive to new ideas in many lines, for that implies thinking for themselves in many lines. The more intense and advanced a man is in one line of thought, the more apt he is to accept ready made the ideas of others in other subjects. It is a saving of time for the radical scientist to accept his politics and religion ready made from those who devote their time to those matters—the scientist does not always do so, but often when he thinks he is asserting his independence by rejecting current beliefs he is doing so without any real ideas and convictions of his own.

* See "The New Spirit in Drama and Art," by Huntley Carter.

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in America followed hot in the footsteps of the split in the Republican party and the triumph of the Democratic along lines so progressive as to seem almost socialistic.

The artists who organized the exhibition did not realize it, but they were animated by precisely the same motive that animated the organizers of the Progressive party — an irresistible desire for a change.

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Youth gazes curiously at the experiment — painting, poem, play — from which age turns in anger.

Cubist paintings interest the young; they irritate the old.

Nothing keeps a man young so effectually as a vivid and sympathetic interest in *every* new and seemingly revolutionary movement.

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People who looked at the cubist paintings and laughed did so through ignorance; the sad part was that many frankly said they did not care to understand; not a few insisted the paintings were quite without meaning, utterly devoid of sense.

In other words, the public, day after day and week after week, struggled and paid to see works that were *meaningless!*

Painters, sculptors, critics, argued and fought over canvases *devoid of significance!* A paradox! For if *devoid of significance,* why should the world of artists, critics, writers, argue, swear, and fight over them?

The question answers itself; the trouble is the works *do* possess a significance, a significance far beyond the merits of any particular one, far beyond the merits of cubism itself; they are significant of the spirit of change that is within and about us, the spirit of unrest, of the striving, of the searching for greater and more beautiful things.

Cubism will pass away, but the spirit of change will not pass away. One enthusiasm will follow another enthusiasm so long as men possess ambition.

Already there are signs that Cubism is passing. Some of the men are calling themselves Neo-Cubists and Post-Cubists, and they are painting in very different manner.

One has but to look at a series of Picasso's work to see how often and radically he has changed his style in these ten years from drawing and painting with great facility and success in Impressionistic and Neo-Impressionistic manner to the most abstract Cubism; what he will be doing two years hence, no one can predict, save that, judging by the past, he will not be painting Cubist pictures.

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The name "Cubism" was given to the new school "in derision, in the autumn of 1908, by Henri Matisse, who happened to see a picture of buildings the cubical representation of which struck him forcibly." *

That year Georges Braque exhibited a Cubist picture in the Salon des Independents.

In 1910, Jean Metzinger exhibited a Cubist portrait in the Salle d'Automne, and a number of pictures were hung in the Salon des Independents.

The first collection was gathered together in room 41 at the Salon des Independents in 1911. The same year the first exhibition outside of Paris was held in Brussels, and there the names "Cubism" and "Cubistes" were adopted.

In 1911 the exposition of the Cubists in the Salle d'Automne caused considerable sensation. Gleizes, Metzinger, Leger, and, for the first time, Marcel Duchamp and his brother, the sculptor-architect, Duchamp-Villon, exhibited.

* This and the following chronological information are from "Les Peintres 'Cubistes,'" by Guillaume Apollinare, 22 *et seq.*

Other expositions were held in November, 1911, at the gallery d'Art Contemporaine rue Tronchet; in 1912, at the Salon des Independents, where Juan Gris first exhibited; in May of the same year, in Barcelona; in June, at Rouen, where Picabia joined the new school.

The different tendencies of the movement are described as follows:*

1. *Cubism scientifique* is the tendency toward pure cubism; it is the painting with elements borrowed not from the realities of vision, but the realities of knowledge. The geometrical lines, which so impressed all who first saw their scientific works, resulted from the attempt to paint the essential—rather than the visual—realities of things which were rendered on canvas with an abstract purity, and in which objective realities and story-telling qualities were eliminated.

2. *Cubism physique* is painting compositions the elements of which are borrowed for the most part from realities of vision. Inasmuch as objective realities are more or less in evidence in these works, they are not pure Cubism.

Picasso's "Woman and the Pot of Mustard" is a very striking—and indifferent—example of *Cubism physique,* which simply means cubist paintings in which figures and objects are more or less apparent to the casual observer. In Marcel Duchamp's "Chess Players" the figures are quite plain; in Picabia's "Dance at the Spring" one figure is distinguishable at first glance, the second is not so easily discerned, while the spring is more obscure, though plain enough after a little study. The technic of this picture is hard and uninteresting; the reproduction is better than the painting.

It is under this head that some of the most interesting

* "Les Peintres 'Cubistes,'" pp. 24-26.

and also some of the most exasperating cubist pictures will be found. To the extent that figures and objects are blocked in in planes and masses in a big, elemental way, the result may be both impressive and beautiful — Derain's "Forest at Martigues" is an example in point; but in so far as the picture is a *puzzle,* clear only in part, the result is exasperating; the observer, however sympathetic his attitude, is diverted from enjoying the *art* of the painter to the attempt to discover the hidden objects.

To the foregoing two divisions are added two more, which are, in reality, but subdivisions or refinements of *Cubism Scientifique.*

3. *Cubism Orphique* is created entirely by the artist; it takes nothing from visual, objective realities, but is derived wholly from the painter's imagination; it is pure art.

4. *Cubism instinctive* is described as the painting of compositions of color, not based upon objective realities, but suggested by the instinct and intentions of the artist. The artist who follows his instinct, his fancy of the moment, though he may paint beautiful compositions, lacks the clear comprehension of him who paints according to some well thought out, artistic creed.

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These refinements of *theory* illustrate the futility of Cubism *as Cubism.* In so far as painters paint in planes or in more or less rectangular and translucent masses because *they love* to do so, their art, however strange, will have vitality and interest, but when they so paint to demonstrate some theory their art is as lifeless as a mechanical drawing.

◈ ◈ ◈

It is quite obvious that subdivisions three and four are based upon temperamental rather than logical or scientific distinctions.

To refer to some of the pictures reproduced:

There is no mystery about the "Man on the Balcony." He is quite in evidence; the background is a little puzzling, yet fairly obvious. The attention of the casual observer is not diverted from the mode and manner of painting—from the Cubism of the picture, so to speak.

It is not a question of "Now I see it, now I don't see it." It is obviously the figure of a man leaning on something, apparently a railing, with a confused background. But so far as uncertainty regarding the background and accessories is concerned, that troubles no one, for uncertainty in detail is characteristic of the backgrounds of many fine and famous portraits.

The point is that the "Man on the Balcony" belongs to that class of Cubist pictures wherein the object is almost as well defined as in pictures with which the public is more familiar; whereas the "King and Queen" belongs to the extreme class wherein the objects have been reduced to symbols or abstractions.

The one is the painting of objects in Cubist fashion; the other is the painting of ideas in Cubist fashion.

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Of all the Cubist pictures exhibited, most people liked "The Man on the Balcony" best. Why?

Because it looked like a good painting of a man in armour.

"I like the 'Man in Armour,'" was an expression frequently heard.

All of which goes to show that appreciation is largely a matter of association rather than of knowledge and taste.

Tell the people it is not a man in armour, and immediately they ask, in a tone of disgust, "Then what is he?" and the picture they liked a moment before becomes ridiculous in their eyes.

GLEIZES
Original drawing for
"Man on Balcony"

The original design is an almost academic freehand drawing of a man — artist or workman — leaning against the railing of a balcony, with roofs of the city at his back. Barring the square treatment of hand and foot, there is little to suggest Cubism.

The drawing is uninteresting, the painting is interesting. By blocking out details, emphasizing planes, and laying stress on masses, the artist made his painting incomparably more dignified and stronger than his design.

If he had painted an academic picture, following the lines of his original sketch, the painting probably would have been quite commonplace.

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The "Chess Players" gives one a singular impression of human absorption in a game; it is elemental and impersonal. Behind the two players are onlookers, equally intent. One player is resting his chin upon his hand, the other holds a piece apparently making a move. The artist has arbitrarily placed the men and board close to the eye of the player making the move.

While most people might prefer lifelike portraits of two men playing chess, is it not true that this curious reduction of the players to elemental planes and masses gives a very vivid impression of intense absorption, and also a strange feeling of the elemental? A sculptor admired this picture greatly.

◆ ◆ ◆

With keen journalistic instinct the papers seized the "Nude Descending a Staircase"* and exploited it for all — and more — than it is worth. With this picture in the room it was impossible for the public to give the serious works the attention they deserved. As a work of art it is nothing.

* Owned in San Francisco.

The room devoted to the Cubists was crowded to suffocation much of the time and it is a pity the pictures were not more carefully selected and arranged so as to show this curious development at its best. Many of the best known Cubists were not represented at all and undue prominence was given others by the hanging of several canvasses where one would have been more than sufficient.

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The power of lines is a manifestation of the new mode of representation.

It is not a semblance of things, but a world of objects that the picture forces us to take in with a glance. The objects may not get lost. The outline is the demarcation and designation of the objects. By its outer essence their inner nature is expressed. The nature of objects is not fixed by a correct drawing, but by a forceful and emotional, intensive and pervasive outline. Not in their restfulness and with their details do the objects serve the picture, but by their relations to each other, which relations combined lead up to the climax.

The long lines form the structure of the picture. They decide how the picture is to be constructed from its parts, and how the parts are to be interlocked in order to become a whole. The long lines define the measure and rhythm of the work. Lines are the vibrations of the soul; lines are reflections of the will, the rigidity of that which endures. Like currents of forces they flow against each other and unite into one. The smaller ones accompany them with playful gambols, like a multiple echo, the sounds of which melt away in the distance.

The picture is not a nicely divided plane. It is like a world arising from chaos. Its essence is the law of order working itself out. The picture is an agglomeration of agitated members, an agglomeration of planes pulsating with blood, enlivened by breath.

The planes may be stratified, parallel and similar to each other; they may rear and pile themselves against each other, or they may interlock like cogs. They may liquefy and melt away, or they may double up and form themselves into balls. They may, more quietly, rest within themselves, becoming effective through the contrast of their essence and yet maintaining themselves. Out of them originates the picture's spaciousness, out of them the living force of the picture.

The dynamics of the planes is a manifestation of the new style.*

* "Das Neue Bild," Otto Fischer, pp. 12-13.

Pausing one morning among a number of first year students drawing from casts in the Chicago Art Institute, I was struck by the large number who were making what would pass for Cubist sketches; yet not one of these young students had seen a Cubist picture. All were simply following the regular course of instruction and drawing *in planes.*

I remember one drawing of a statue by Michael Angelo. There was not a straight line in the statue; there was not a curved line in the drawing; the drawing was blocked out far more solidly and geometrically than, for instance, either the original design for "The Man on the Balcony" or the finished painting.

In another room I ran across a teacher who was indicating by a few geometrical lines drawn from points the essential features of a statue the pupil was about to begin blocking in. The lines looked exactly like the geometrical lines in a drawing by Picasso.

There is, therefore, nothing fundamentally new or strange in the technic of the Cubists; it is simply a return to the use of the elemental in drawing, of the very A, B, C of design. The new and the strange lie in the fact that the Cubists *stop* with planes and lines; they do not attempt to model the surfaces of the things they paint.

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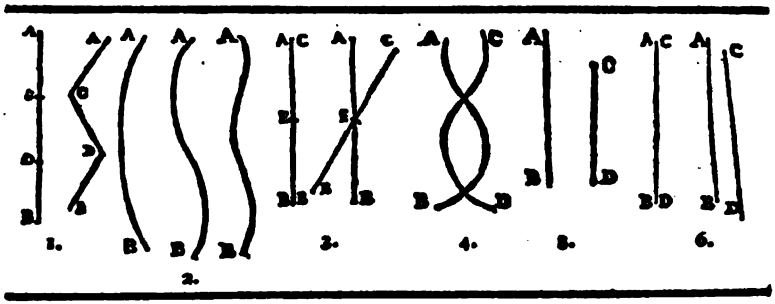
Not that the use of planes is all there is to the theory of Cubism, for the theory extends far beyond the painting of surfaces; it embraces the presentation of the very *substance* and nature of persons and objects by means of a *technic* in which planes are the vital feature.

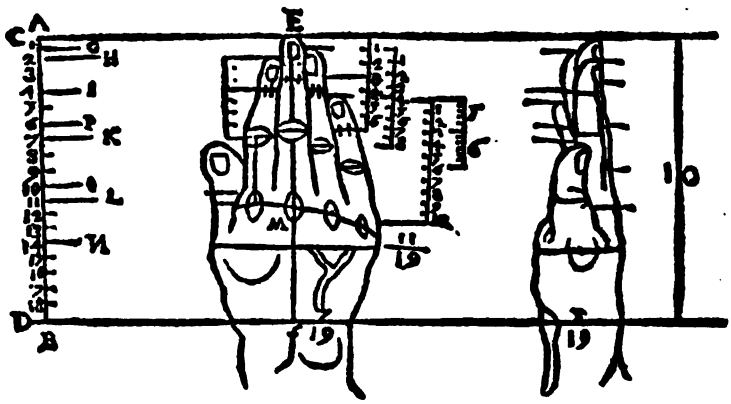
◆ ◆ ◆

Albert Durer wrote a book on the proportions of the human figure; it was published in 1528, and translated into many languages.

He reduced the human figure to certain elemental lines.*



Applying these principles to the hand, he gets this result:



It is interesting to compare this sectional diagram of the hand with the hand of "The Man on the Balcony."

Furthermore, one has but to consider the elemental lines at the top of the page with the words of Cezanne, quoted on page 43, and with the fundamental propositions of Chinese and Japanese art, to realize that in the last analysis the

* See "The Mask," Vol. VI, pp. 64-75.

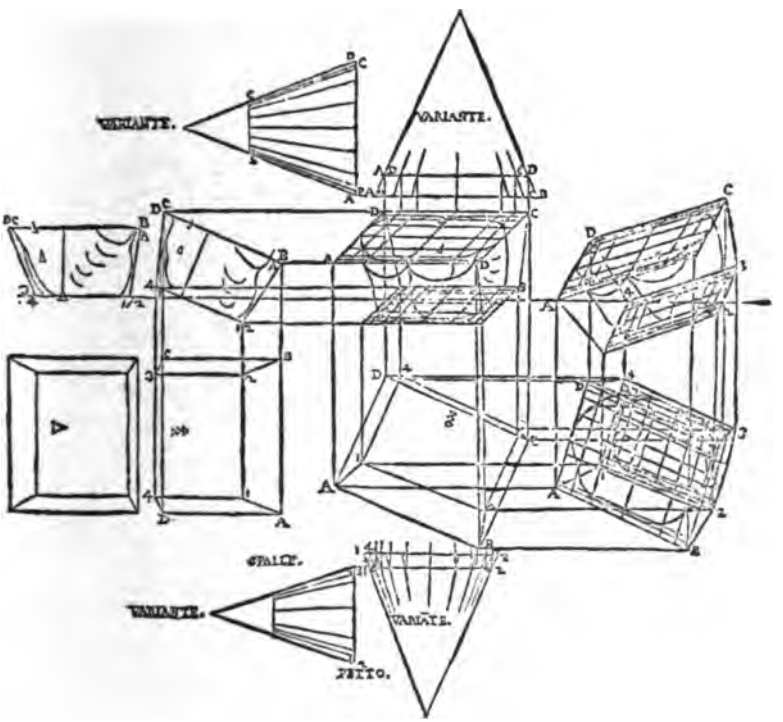
PICASSO
Woman with Mandolin

PICASSO
The Poet

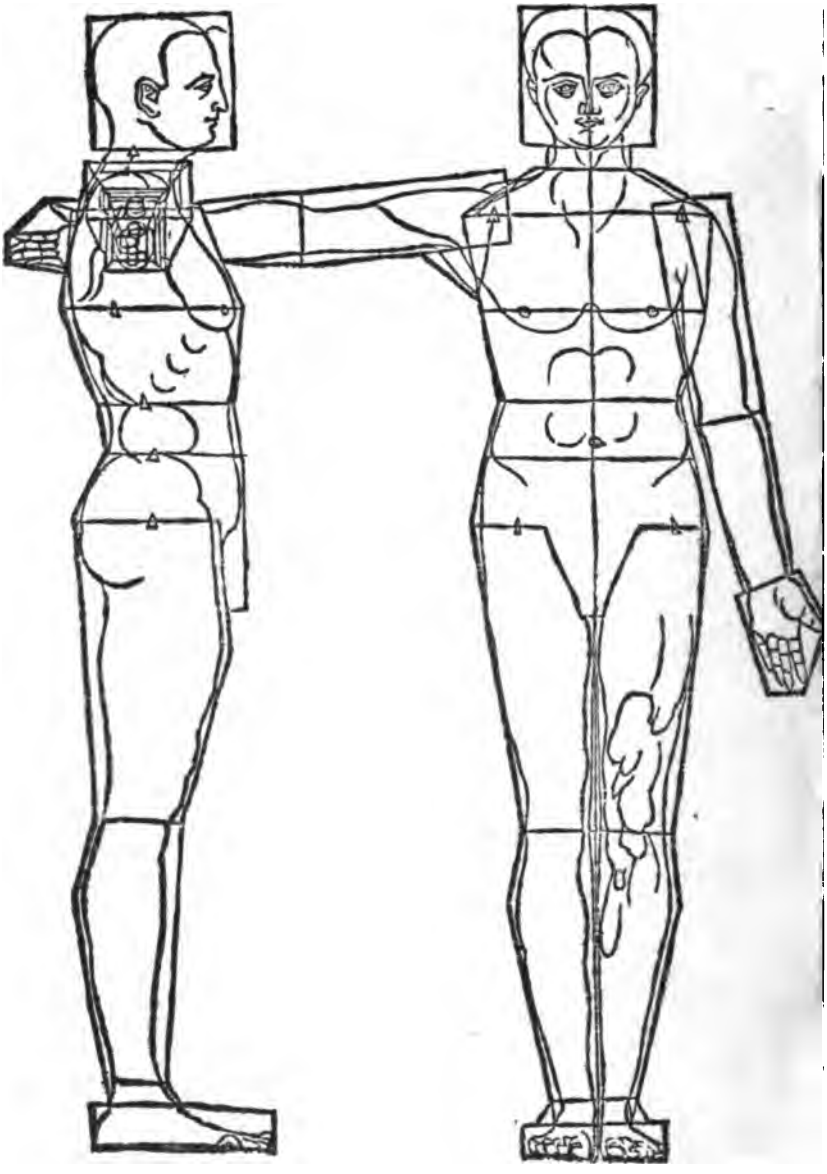
minds of men in all ages and all countries follow very closely the same channels.

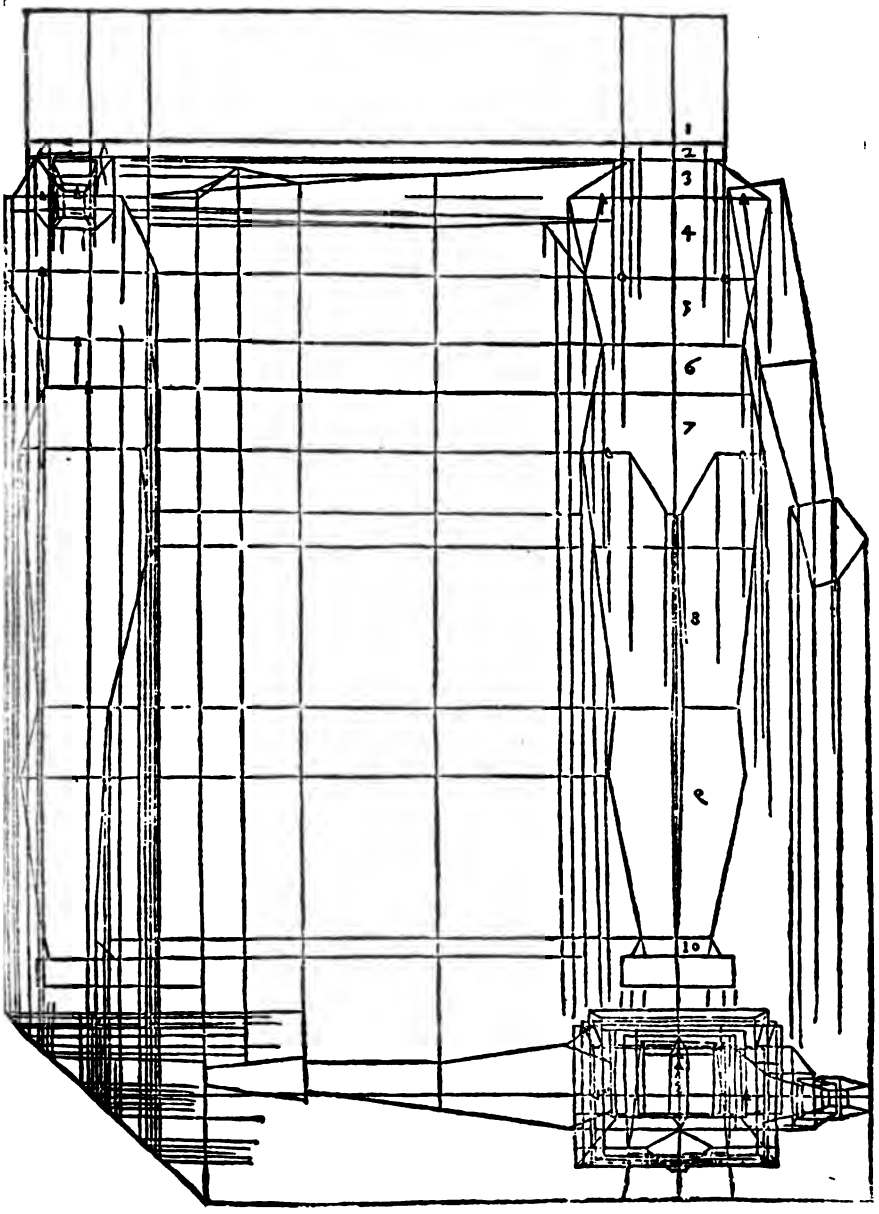
There are but *two* lines, *curved* and *straight*, and with these two lines all outward semblances of things are constructed. So far as the unaided eye is concerned, every curved line may be entirely composed of small straight lines, the curved effect being due to a series of minute angles.

The following are Durer's diagrams showing how to obtain sections and modifications:



He applies these sections to the human figure as follows:

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So far as the use of planes and angles is concerned, these diagrams by Durer should serve to disarm criticism. That the human figure can be decomposed into straight lines and angles will be a revelation to most of those who laughed at the Cubist paintings, and only the authority of a great name would convince that any good could result from such an analysis.

Suppose any one of the Durer diagrams had been framed and hung in the Cubist section; would it not have been treated with ridicule?

The men who arranged the exhibition could have played with critics and artists — the men who claim to know — by including many things of recognized position in academic art and teachings, which would have seemed as absurd as the newest of the new pictures.

The very high aesthetic value of drawing and painting in planes, and with small regard to the so-called laws of perspective, is illustrated in the rare beauty of Chinese and Japanese paintings. From the point of view of their greatest painters, we carry perspective and imitation to extremes that destroy art.

One value of the Cubist movement lies in arousing a sense of the strength possessed by the simple and elemental.

In oriental art, in archaic art, in primitive Italian art, in not a little modern decorative work, we have long recognized the beauty of drawing in planes and of the use of color arbitrarily. The Cubists are showing us — perhaps too violently and imperfectly — that it is possible to paint pictures and portraits in planes and masses without imitation. That it is possible we know, for the orientals have done it for two thousand years; nevertheless, we stubbornly resist the attempt in western art.

We acknowledge the singular beauty of the Italian primitives, yet we demand that portraits and paintings of today

shall be carefully modelled in the vain effort to accurately and mechanically copy nature.

◈ ◈ ◈

In some of Sargent's best portraits not only the lights and shadows but character and personality are indicated by brush-strokes as arbitrary in line and color as those of a Cubist—strokes that follow neither the lines nor the colors of the original, but which convey with tremendous power the *character*.

Again, we all know how insipid are most of the portraits that are faithfully rounded and modelled to reproduce every curve of the sitters' features.

The truth is there is more of Cubism in great painting than we dream, and the extravagances of the Cubists may serve to open our eyes to beauties we have always felt without quite understanding.

Take, for instance, the strongest things by Winslow Homer; the strength lies in the big, elemental manner in which the artist rendered his impressions in lines and masses which departed widely from photographic reproductions of scenes and people.

Rodin's bronzes exhibit these same elemental qualities, qualities which are pushed to violent extremes in Cubist sculpture. But may it not be profoundly true that these very extremes, these very extravagances, by causing us to blink and rub our eyes, end in a finer understanding and appreciation of such work as Rodin's?

His Balzac is, in a profound sense, his most colossal work, and at the same time his most elemental. In its simplicity, in its use of planes and masses, it is—one might say, solely for purposes of illustration—Cubist, with none of the extravagances of Cubism. It is *purely* Post-Impressionistic.

Twenty or twenty-five years ago painters who used a broad technic, and especially those who used the palette knife to lay the pigment in flat sweeps, were looked upon as charlatans and sensationalists. Today their pictures are accepted in the most conservative exhibitions and the public passes with scarcely a comment.

This broad technic is simply painting in planes—in a sense, simply modified Cubism.

To illustrate:

The surface of an orange may be so carefully painted or modelled in clay that the effect is a perfect sphere with no straight lines; or it may be painted or modelled in minute planes and no curved lines; or the use of planes may be carried so far the orange is represented by angles so sharp the shape is almost cubical—it is all a question of the *extent* to which the artist carries the use of *plane surfaces*. The *fewer* the planes used and the *larger* their size, the nearer the *substance* and more obvious the representation of *mass*.

The *smaller* the planes and the *larger* their number, the nearer the *surface*—the more superficial the representation.

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The division of planes can be carried—geometrically—to such an extent that the unaided eye can no longer distinguish the minute flat surfaces, and the effect is a perfect sphere.

What is true concerning the painting or modelling of an orange is true of the painting or modelling of all objects.

◆ ◆ ◆

"It has been charged that the new men are too much given to the geometrical. But geometrical figures are the essential elements of drawing. Geometry, the science which deals with extension, its measure and its relations, has ever been the basis of painting.

SEVERINI
The Milliner

"Up to the present time the three dimensions of Euclid have sufficed to express the problems that infinity gives rise to in the souls of great artists.

"Geometry is to the plastic arts what grammar is to the art of the writer.

"Today philosophers do not confine their speculations to the three dimensions of Euclid. Painters, by intention, so to speak, have cause naturally to preoccupy themselves with these new lines of extension which, in the language of modern studios, are classed under the term, *fourth* dimension."*

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Speaking of Cézanne, it is said:

To him a sphere was not always round, a cube always square, or an ellipse always elliptical. Thus the traditional oval of the conventional face disappeared in his portraits, the generally accepted round surfaces of a vase or bowl was represented as flat and dented in spots and the horizontal stability of the horizon was rendered elliptical whenever it so appeared to him.

The general truthfulness of his observations may readily be tested by any one of normal vision who will carefully observe the actual appearance of the surfaces of a round sugar bowl, for example, when placed in the light of a window. It will be found that certain planes are as flat as the table, that others present the appearance of dents and hollows, and the more clearly this is perceived the more grotesque will the object appear as compared with the preconceived image of it established in our minds by the unconscious interaction of the sense of touch and sight.

We know that, scientifically regarded, there is no such thing as a round surface, that what appears to be such is simply the closely adjusted juxtaposition of infinitesimal planes that are each perfectly flat. And the very fact that painters refer to the surface of a figure as *planes* is indicative of a partial recognition of this basic characteristic of structure. Nevertheless, both artists and laymen persist in speaking of the roundness of a torso, for example, when in reality, if we could disassociate the *sense* of roundness from the *appearance* of roundness as did Cézanne, we would find large surfaces of spheroids quite flat. Therein lies the real secret of the art of Cézanne who is the first of realists.

* "Les Peintres 'Cubistes,'" Guillaume Apollinare, p. 15.

In a sense, "Cubism" is a misleading term, for, in the first place, "Cubist" pictures are not painted in cubes, but in all sorts of angles and curves; in the second place, the theory does not call for angles.

The theory being the expression of emotion in line and color, there is no conceivable reason why cubes and angles should be used to the exclusion of curves, swirls, sweeps, dashes. On the contrary, of all forms, cubes and angles would seem to be the most inappropriate for emotional expression, since they are peculiarly suggestive of the geometrical and the matter-of-fact.

Picabia says that "Cubism" is a misnomer for the movement. He says:

> After impressionism, neo-impressionism, then cubism, which sought a geometric third dimension in painting, the expression of things seen in geometrical figures. But a purely subjective art cannot, of course, be bound by any form of expression the moment that expression becomes a convention, an established body of laws with accepted values. Therefore, he has cut loose from cubism, and is what, again for handy classification — an evil habit from which we cannot emancipate ourselves — may perhaps best be called "post-cubist," with entirely unfettered, spontaneous, ever-varying means of expression in form and color waves, according to the commands, the needs, the inspiration of the impression, the mood received. Objective expression is strictly barred. He even ignores form as far as possible, seeking "color harmonies." Harmony and equilibrium are his device.

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But the Cubists are rapidly getting away from the cubes and angles. It is quite possible that a year or two hence we shall see no more *purely* Cubist pictures.*

That does not mean the movement will come to an

* Compare this paragraph with what is said on page 67. The four years that have elapsed have verified these predictions. *Cubism* has had its day and served its purpose; it is still in evidence in the work of many men and it has given painters and sculptors generally new angles — literally and figuratively — of vision.

end—not at all. The movement toward abstract painting, toward the use of line and paint on canvas for mere pleasure of using them, and without copying objects in either life or nature, is in its infancy.

◈ ◈ ◈

"But I don't understand them!"

Is it necessary to your enjoyment that you should?

Do you understand what Caruso is singing?

Do you understand that French song reproduced by the phonograph?

Do you understand what the orchestra is playing?

Do you understand the pattern in that Persian rug?

How many people who rave over Japanese art have the remotest idea what this or that precious print or painting represents?

Does an intricate design on a bit of Oriental pottery please you? And is your enjoyment lessened one whit by the fact it is all a mystery to you?

Why will you accept as beautiful and buy at a high price a painting you do not understand because it is by a Chinese artist, and reject as ugly the painting by a French artist simply because you cannot see "what he is driving at"?

◈ ◈ ◈

Suppose a Cubist picture is a beautiful scheme of color; is it less beautiful *in color* because you do not understand the painter's theory? His painting may be fine, his theory absurd.

Would your enjoyment of Caruso be increased if he sang in English the ridiculous stuff he sings in Italian?

Fortunate it is for most grand opera that we *do not understand*—we are not diverted from the music by the nonsense of the libretto.

The enjoyment of music is a curious thing.

First of all, there are all kinds of music, from rag-time to Beethoven, and each kind has its following.

Then the following of each kind breaks up into its rag-time and Beethoven divisions.

That is to say, in an audience listening to rag-time there are always a few who enjoy the music in a Beethoven way—for what there is of real value in it.

While in an audience listening to a Beethoven symphony there are always a goodly number, often a big majority, who enjoy it in a rag-time way—just the emotional reaction, without knowing a thing about the music.

There are two entirely distinct enjoyments of the same composition—the purely intellectual and the purely emotional. There may be a mingling of the two, but as a rule what one gains the other loses.

The man who follows the score, is familiar with the different interpretations of this and that leader, whose ear catches every failure by any part of the orchestra to respond, and so on, and so on—that man is constantly holding his emotional response subject to his intellectual appreciation. What is a fine performance to most of the audience may be a very indifferent performance to him.

True, when the performance is so fine it carries him off his feet, then he gets an enjoyment—intellectual and emotional—far finer than the enjoyment experienced by others. In a sense, he is the one man worth playing for.

But while it is a fine thing to both understand and enjoy, understanding is not essential to enjoyment in the purely emotional sense—to the enjoyment most people feel when listening to music.

The voice of a street singer borne in upon the night air, even the sound of a hurdy-gurdy, pleases, though we do not

know the song or the air. There is a species of pleasure in not knowing that is dissipated when we recall or are told.

Many of our enjoyments are more than half dreamy. Is it not true that the dreamy element is essential to purely emotional enjoyment?

I confess to a very ignorant enjoyment of music. If I am at a concert I do not like to be told what it is all about. I enjoy good music without knowing or caring why, and I like to hear it without being seated where I am more than half-hypnotized by the rhythmical movements of the orchestra, especially the fascinating bowing of the violins.

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What is true of the enjoyment of music should be true of the enjoyment of painting. But with painting, most people insist upon understanding. They will listen to a Patti without knowing her language, but they will not look at a painting unless they know the painter's language.

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Why not accept at their face value all pictures that are beautiful in line and color, without bothering about their meaning? Perhaps they have no meaning beyond the vagrant fancy of the artist.

Take the three pictures by Sousa Cardoza. Suppose they have no more significance than so many illustrations to a fairy tale; they are interesting in line and fascinating in color. If the "Stronghold" had been on a Delft platter, or the "Leap of the Rabbit" on a piece of Persian pottery, everyone would have lauded their beauty, and collectors would give ten or twenty times the modest prices of the canvases.

When put to people in that matter-of-fact way the response is almost always favorable to the pictures.

In an interesting monograph entitled "Is It Art?"* the writer says:

It will be seen, therefore, that the efforts of these men to give a subjective rendering of actuality results in nothing better than a poorly realized form of objectivity which is as much the creation of the spectator as of the artist, inasmuch as the vaguely adumbrated forms in the picture simply serve as a hint to that reality of which it is a wilfully distorted symbol, and the discovery of the "mustard pot" would scarcely have been possible without the happy cooperation of the title with the spectator's previous knowledge of the actual appearance of a mustard pot.

Without the intervention of the title and the association of ideas called forth thereby through the memory of past experiences with actuality, these pictures would be totally meaningless even to the most recondite. They would inevitably be reduced to a personal system of shorthand, an individual code, as it were, comprehensible only to the originator.

Regarded from that viewpoint, these enigmatic paintings and drawings may very possibly be altogether successful. At all events it is only fair to assume that these works express to the originator what he intended them to express. But it is quite obvious that they express something quite different to the spectator who has not been initiated into the meaning of this personal form of shorthand, and the appending of an objective title to what is intended as a subjective impression of the actual world hardly help him over the difficulty. On the contrary it takes him just that far away from the impression the artist desires to produce, plunging him deeper into that world of reality out of which he was to be extricated by this new art, and there is no doubt that in the minds of even the most intelligent spectator it only serves to reenforce his conception of reality upon which he is forced to fall back by the objective titles as well as the concrete representations of what is supposed to be a subjective mood.

I think it may safely be said that in no case does this mood manifest itself to the persons to whom it is addressed, although by a process of auto-hypnotism, a certain few no doubt succeed in making themselves believe that they penetrate the real inwardness of these arbitrarily individual mental processes. Granted that these very discerning ones do respond to the real intention of these abstractions it cannot be denied that this work is the most circumscribed in its

*"Is It Art? Post-Impressionism, Cubism, Futurism," by J. N. Laurvik. The sub-title is obviously confusing, since Post-Impressionism includes all the developments following Impressionism.

appeal of anything so far produced in the name of art and, until its working premise is made clearer, its influence must be correspondingly limited. At present it appears to me to be a too purely personal equation to be intelligible to others than the artist himself and therefore, generally speaking, it can not be regarded as art, whatever else it may be. For that that communicates nothing expresses nothing and as the office of art is first and last expression this new form is as yet outside of the domain of art.

But that makes the attitude of the *observer* the test whether a given product is or is not art, while the true test is the attitude of the *producer*.

Whether a given work is or is not art is *determined* and *forever fixed* at the time of its production. If art to him who creates it, it is art to all humanity for all time; neither a man's neighbors nor future generations can deprive it of its character.

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Quite a good many years ago I made the attempt, in lecture and book form, to define art.*

What is Art? The question is as old as man himself, for we have no records of men without some manifestation of the art impulse. . . .

Man is the *combination* of *thought* and *symbol;* thought striving to express itself, and symbol, the means whereby it achieves that end. The symbol may be sound, word, or song; or it may be line, form, or structure; it matters not. A cry is the language of the child; speech is the every-day utterance of the man; the heart of the singer bursts forth in song; the musician speaks in harmonies, the painter in line and color, the sculptor in form, the architect in structure, the poet in rhyme and rhythm — and each is silent save in his own way. . . .

Now what is the distinction between *thought* expression which *is art* and *thought* expression which is *not art?*

In its broadest significance, and in its very essence, *art is delight in thought and symbol.*

Mark the union — art is delight in *both* the thought *and* the

* "Delight; the Soul of Art," p. 9 et seq.

symbol. Without the double delight — the combination of these two quite distinct delights, there can be no art.

To the writer of prose there may come a beautiful fancy; he delights in it and hastens to record his thought. He may write the most flowing, the most perfect prose, but as he writes he is still occupied with his thought; his sole object is to find words which will but express it. The same fancy comes to the poet; he, too, delights in it, and seeks to record it; but when the poet touches pen to paper he is seized with a new and an entirely distinct delight, a delight *in his method of expressing* his thought; he may even permit his delight in his symbol, the flow, rhythm and ring of rhyme, to sweep him onward in forgetfulness of his first fancy — literature is filled with such examples.

Now and then a writer of prose expresses himself so finely, writes so well, that we feel instinctively and immediately not only the delight in the thought, but also a certain amount of delight in the manner of expressing the thought, in the style, . . . and to the extent of the *double* delight such prose is art, for art, as we shall see, is by no means confined to the five so-called fine arts.

No hard and fast line can be drawn between that which is art and that which is not art, the one fades imperceptibly into the other.

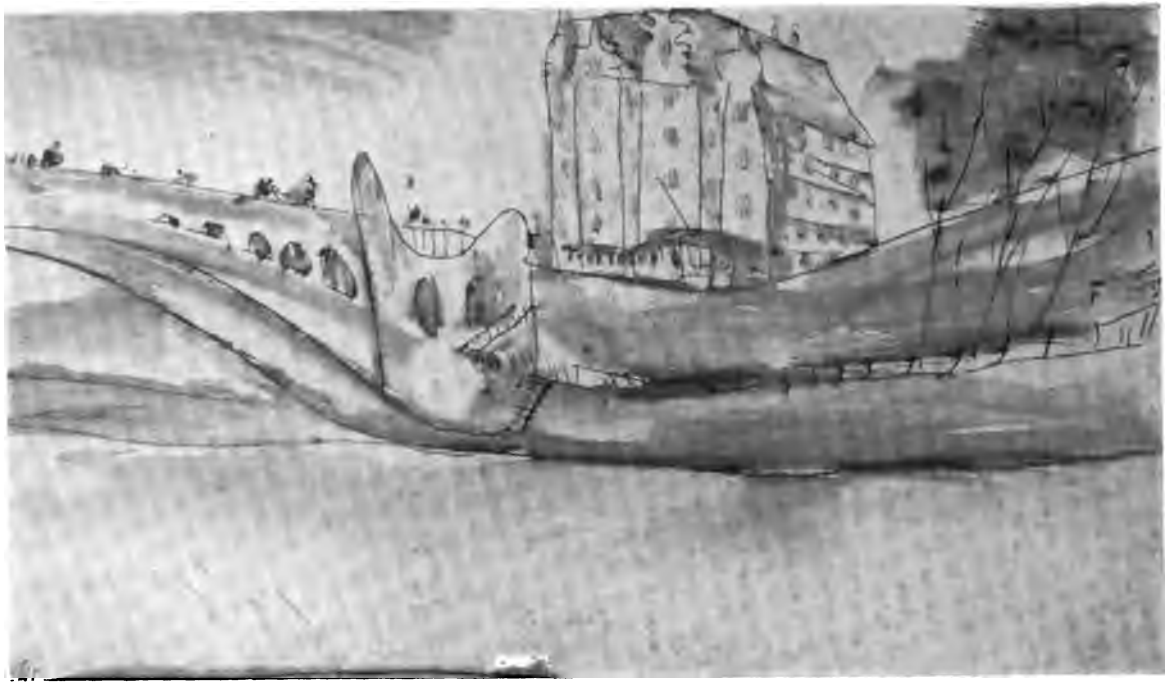
And farther on in the same little volume:*

The current notions of art are such and the current notions of labor are such that it may seem to most of you as though any attempt to discuss the two together could result only in a waste of words; yet time was when art and labor were so intimately united in the great domain of human effort that the one almost invariably implied more or less of the other; and the time will yet be when there will be no labor without at least some art, even as there is now and ever has been no art without at least some labor.

Art lies not in the employment, but in the *manner* of the employment of the powers of nature for an end; not in the task, but in the *attitude* of the worker towards his task.

Whether a Cubist painting is or is not art does not depend upon the opinion of either critic or multitude; if it did it would be art to one man and not to another, art to one generation and not to another — an illogical conclusion.

* "Delight; the Soul of Art," lecture V, "Delight in Labor."



KLEE
House by the Brook

VAN REES
Still Life

Most Cubist pictures are plainly the work of men who are profoundly moved by an idea and who are striving to express that idea in a highly original manner. It may be the manner they have chosen is so abstract, so scientifically theoretical, that it will in the end—if pursued—kill the imagination, stifle all delight, and so result in failure as *art expression;* but so long as the men take sincere delight in both what they are trying to say and their manner of utterance, it is impossible to deny the character of art to their works.

In proportion to their originality and daring, there may be more of living and vital art in what they are doing than in the art of the academic painter who follows in the footsteps of others without any particular effort.

In other words, it is quite conceivable there may be more of vital and living art in a movement doomed to failure than in a movement that has achieved success and become stagnant.

The vitality lies in the element of earnest striving rather than in the direction the striving takes.

VI

THE THEORY OF CUBISM

THE art that is at hand is a highly *subjective* art as distinguished from the highly *objective* art of the Impressionist and Realist, but no man can say just what forms this new art will assume.

Cubism is one attempt, Futurism is another, Compositional painting is another; there will be many more attempts before freedom of expression is attained.

Cubism is interesting because it accentuates the value of planes and shows what can be done with elemental propositions in drawing. But the student or painter who turns to Cubism because he thinks it is to become a fad and will pay, runs the risk of making a great mistake; he would better stick to older methods.

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The Orphists have been mentioned; there were no Orphist pictures in the International Exhibition. The movement is based on the purely practical proposition that color in itself, and color alone without drawing, may be beautiful. So they just place lines and masses of color on a canvas and frame the canvas.

It sounds absurd, yet the theory is the very foundation of wall decoration, of interior furnishing, of dressmaking—the mere juxtaposition of masses of color, with or without pattern.

The Orphist "picture" may not be much of a picture in the accepted sense of the term, but it may afford pleasure as a color combination and may be of very real value to the

decorator, the furnisher, the dressmaker, the scene-painter, the costumer.

The theory is not new. So long as man has loved color he has used it irrespective of pattern.

One part of the theory of the Cubists is as old as that of the Orphists. It is simply that the painter can do with line and color what the composer does with sound. In other words they demand the same freedom in the use of line and color that every great composer has in the use of sound.

If, for instance, a great musician composes a pastoral symphony does he imitate the mooing of cows, the bleating of lambs, the rippling of brooks? Such attempts would be recognized as cheap in the extreme.

"Very well," the Cubist says, "if I paint a pastoral symphony why should I so much as suggest cows, sheep, landscape, brook? Why should people insist upon *seeing* in my painting what they cannot *hear* in Mozart's or Beethoven's music?"

◆ ◆ ◆

The comparison which Picabia is fondest of making is that with absolute music. The rules of musical composition, he points out, are sufficiently hampering in themselves to the composer's mood, or call it inspiration. Words, as of songs, still further confine his vision of melody, even though they give in the beginning the impression that evokes the mood. Songs without words, the expression of the impression made on him by a great poem without the necessity of following in musical form the literary form of the poet, leave him far freer, give his subjectivity far wider scope. Modern composers have rebelled against the old fetters; modern painters have begun to feel the same need of a freer, an absolute method of expression. Hence, "post-impressionism," which refuses altogether to be bound by objectivity, by literal repro-

duction of the object seen, in connection with the mood, the after-impression, received and fixed on the canvas. A composer may be inspired by a walk in the country, says M. Picabia, and produce a production of the landscape scene, of its details of form and color? No; he expresses it in sound waves, he translates it into an expression of the impression, the mood. And as there are absolute sound waves, so there are absolute waves of color and form. Modern music has won its way; this modern painting, too, will find appreciation and understanding in the days to come.

◆ ◆ ◆

The Cubists have set themselves a hard task. It is a good deal easier to *sing* an *emotion* than *paint* one. It is a good deal easier to *paint* an *object* than *sing* one—therein lies the trouble.

Yet in the beginning both music and painting were imitative. Music imitated natural sounds; drawing and painting imitated natural objects.

But soon men began to sing for the pleasure of singing and play on instruments for the pleasure of playing, and the imitation of natural sounds was left far behind as primitive and elemental, and music tended to become more and more expressive of emotions, elemental emotions at first, finer and purer emotions later, until in the western world abstract purity was reached in Beethoven.

Since Beethoven there has been a reaction to more imitative music, as in the operas of Wagner.

While music departed farther and farther from imitation of natural sounds, drawing and painting progressed toward the more perfect representation of natural objects.

Or rather painting developed along two distinct lines—one the more perfect representation of objects *for the sake of the representation;* the other compositions of line and color—

not imitative—for the sake of the pleasure afforded *by the pattern and the color scheme.*

This second development parallels that of music—compositions of line and color, like compositions of sound for the pleasure they give, and not for the associations they arouse.

Strange as it may sound, it is nevertheless true, that four-fifths of the pleasure we get in our daily lives out of line and color is not from the *imitative* development, the *picture* side, but from the *non-imitative,* the *abstract* side.

Our clothes, our homes, our public buildings, our cities, our landscapes are made beautiful by the use of line and color in patterns and masses—in harmonious composition. It is only here and there that we come in contact with either line or color used imitatively.

We all know how distressingly tiresome a wall-paper becomes if it is made up of imitative scenes—that is, a series of pictures, and the better the pictures the sooner we tire of the paper.

While a paper that contains no imitative spots, or in which the imitative features are so subdued and conventionalized we *feel* them rather than *see* them, may be restful and pleasing; and a wall that is a monotone if bordered by wainscoting and frieze in monotones, may wear the best of all.

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But while the great, the practical use of line and color followed parallel lines with sound and got farther and farther away from imitative features, *the art* of painting, as it is commonly called, developed in just the opposite direction, it became more and more imitative, until of late years it would seem that the last word has been said in the reproduction of natural objects and natural light and color effects.

Of course the *last* word has not been said, and never will be said so long as *individuals* are born, but *so much* has been

said that it is not surprising there is a reaction, nor is it surprising that one phase of this reaction should be an attempt to use line and color as the decorator and the dressmaker and a thousand others use them, to express and kindle pleasurable emotions.

In short it is not surprising that the painter of pictures should awaken to the realization of the fact that others use and have used, from the beginning, line and color to make delightful compositions that have no relation to natural objects, as the musician uses sound to make delightful compositions that have no relation to natural noises.

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As a rule women have a finer instinct for the use and arrangement of color than painters. Few wives of painters would trust their husbands to decorate their dinner tables.

Look at the gruesome and ugly "still lifes" done by painters of renown. I saw one the other day of some fish on a platter by an American painter famous for such things. If his wife had found that platter of dead and clammy fish in her drawing room she would have exclaimed, "For goodness sake, how did that get in here? Take it back to the kitchen."

◆ ◆ ◆

Look at the naive and absurd compositions of flowers and fruit that painters put together to paint; no woman of taste would permit them on her tea table.

I know a charming woman whose dinner tables are a dream of beauty, veritable compositions in which flowers and fruits and lights and every detail are far more thoughtfully considered than are the details in most pictures. In short, without knowing it she creates a work of art each time she entertains. Imagine what her table would be if left to an artist or a committee of artists — or her husband!

Most painters' studios are either devoid of all color arrangement or positively ugly.

So far as *color* goes many a portrait owes its success more to the *modiste* than the artist.

◆ ◆ ◆

From the painting of color harmonies and line harmonies it is but a step to insist that line and color composition may be used like sound compositions to express one's moods and emotions.

That is what these modern men are trying to do.

You may not think it is possible for them to succeed but why should you ridicule the attempt?

The attempt is an ambitious one, it is an attempt to extend the sphere of painting, and it may lead to new and beautiful things. Should we not watch it with interest and sympathy even if you think it foredoomed to failure?

◆ ◆ ◆

Watch a painter preparing to paint a picture of still life. He takes a vase of flowers and places it on a table; beside it he poses, perhaps a brass bowl and some other objects, having regard throughout for light and, above all, for proportion and color. That is when he is *really painting* his picture, when he is really *composing,* receiving his impression, creating his subjective mood. The objective part of his work is done; all that remains now is to give expression to that impression, that mood. Instead of thus allowing his inspiration to gain its full value and significance, he sits down and reproduces it with a varying degree of literalness. He becomes nothing more or less than a copyist, a photographer of his own work. He kills within himself its subjective values, or, at best, seeks to give them expression filtered by objectivity. Or, again, consider the case of the portrait painter. He studies sitters from every point of view, gathering impressions. Then he begins to experiment with poses, draperies, light effects, seeking to heighten the impression already received from the sitter himself. At last he is content with pose, draperies, background, lights — his picture is there. But why, then, go to the trouble of painting it, of copying it? If the work he has done, finished in all its details, is to benefit him, he must proceed

from it and beyond it. His real work then is to communicate to others the mood awakened in him.*

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In another interview Picabia said:

You of New York should be quick to understand me and my fellow painters. Your New York is the cubist, the futurist city. It expresses in its architecture, its life, its spirit, the modern thought. You have passed through all the old schools, and are futurists in word and deed and thought. You have been affected by all these schools just as we have been affected by our older schools.

Because of your extreme modernity therefore, you should quickly understand the studies which I have made since my arrival in New York. They express the spirit of New York as I feel it, and the crowded streets of your city as I feel them, their surging, their unrest, their commercialism, and their atmospheric charm.

You see no form? No substance? Is it that I go out into your city and see nothing? I see much, much more, perhaps, than you who are used to it see. I see your stupendous skyscrapers, your mammoth buildings and marvellous subways, a thousand evidences of your great wealth on all sides. The tens of thousands of workers and toilers, your alert and shrewd-looking shop girls, all hurrying somewhere. I see your theater crowds at night gleaming, fluttering, smilingly happy, smartly gowned. There you have the spirit of modernity again.

But I do not paint these things which my eye sees. I paint that which my brain, my soul, sees. I walk from the Battery to Central Park. I mingle with your workers, and your Fifth Avenue mondaines. My brain gets the impression of each movement; there is the driving hurry of the former, their breathless haste to reach the place of their work in the morning and their equal haste to reach their homes at night. There is the languid grace of the latter, emanating a subtle perfume, a more subtle sensuousness.

I hear every language in the world spoken, the staccato of the New Yorker, the soft cadences of the Latin people, the heavy rumble of the Teuton, and the ensemble remains in my soul as the ensemble of some great opera.

At night from your harbor I look at your mammoth buildings. I see your city as a city of aerial lights and shadows; the streets are your shadows. Your harbor in the daylight shows the shipping

* From "An Interview with Francois Picabia," in the "New York Tribune."

HERBIN
Landscape

of a world, the flags of all countries add their color to that given by your sky, your waters, and your painted craft of every size.

I absorb these impressions. I am in no hurry to put them on canvas. I let them remain in my brain, and then when the spirit of creation is at flood-tide, I improvise my pictures as a musician improvises music. The harmonies of my studies grow and take form under my brush, as the musician's harmonies grow under his fingers. His music is from his brain and his soul just as my studies are from my brain and soul. Is this not clear to you?

◆ ◆ ◆

You say all this cannot be done.

That is precisely the question, and one thing certain, it cannot and will not be done, unless some one *tries* to do it.

It is just as legitimate to attempt to express one's emotions by the use of line and color as by the use of sound as in music, or by the use of motion as in pantomime.

One man says, "I will paint the portrait of a beautiful woman."

A second says, "I will not paint her portrait, but I will put on canvas a composition of colors so joyous it will express my admiration for her."

A third says, "I will compose a sonata or a symphony or a 'song without words' to express my love for her."

The public accepts without question the work of the first and third—the portrait painter and the musician—but rejects the work of the second—the painter of harmonies. Why? Because he does not copy the features and the dress of the woman.

◆ ◆ ◆

Picabia again says:

Art, art, what is art? Is it copying faithfully a person's face? A landscape? No, that is machinery. Painting Nature as she is, is not art, it is mechanical genius. The old masters turned out by hand the most perfect models, the most faithful copies of what they saw. That all their paintings are not alike is due to the fact that no two men see the same things the same way. Those old masters were, and their modern followers are, faithful depicters of the actual,

but I do not call that art today, because we have outgrown it. It is old, and only the new should live. Creating a picture without models is art.

They were successful, those old masters; they filled a place in our life that cannot be filled otherwise, but we have outgrown them. It is a most excellent thing to keep their paintings in the art museums as curiosities for us and for those who will come after us. Their paintings are to us what the alphabet is to the child.

We moderns, if so you think of us, express the spirit of the modern time, the twentieth century. And we express it on canvas the way the great composers express it in their music.

There is plenty of clear expression and fine enthusiasm in those three paragraphs.

◈ ◈ ◈

There is, however, another side to Cubism and one not so easy to understand.

Painting color harmonies for the sake of their emotional effect is easy of comprehension. But when the Cubist sets out to convey the impression, not of the surfaces, but of the very substance of things, he is attempting something very different from what has heretofore been considered within the sphere of painting. Possibly he is attempting something painting cannot do.

The theory is so abstract and so scientific it comes near paralyzing the art. It is *too coldly logical* and unemotional to produce great art, for great art is and must be fundamentally *emotional.*

Of Picasso, the founder and leading exponent of Cubism, a sympathetic writer says:

His whole tendency is a negation of the main tenets of the gospel of Cézanne whose conception of form he rejects, together with Monet's conception of light and color. To him both are non-existent. Instead he endeavors "to produce with his work an impression, not with the subject, but the manner in which he expresses it," to quote his confrère, Marius De Zayas, who studied the raison d'être of this work, together with Picasso. Describing his process of aesthetic

deduction further, M. De Zayas tells us that "he (Picasso) receives a direct impression from external nature; he analyzes, develops, and translates it, and afterwards executes it in his own particular style, with the intention that the picture should be the pictorial equivalent of the emotion produced by nature. In presenting his work he wants the spectator to look for the emotion or idea generated from the spectacle and not the spectacle itself.

"From this to the psychology of form there is but one step, and the artist has given it resolutely and deliberately. Instead of the physical manifestation he seeks in form the psychic one, and on account of his peculiar temperament, his psychical manifestation inspires him with geometrical sensations. When he paints he does not limit himself to taking from an object only those planes which the eye perceives, but deals with all those which, according to him, constitute the individuality of form; and with his peculiar fantasy he develops and transforms them.

"And this suggests to him new impressions, which he manifests with new forms, because from the idea of the representation of a being, a new being is born, perhaps different from the first one, and this becomes the represented being. Each one of his paintings is the coefficient of the impressions that form has performed in his spirit, and in these paintings the public must see the realization of an artistic ideal, and must judge them by the abstract sensation they produce, without trying to look for the factors that entered into the composition of the final result.

"As it is not his purpose to perpetuate on canvas an aspect of the external world, by which to produce an artistic impression, but to represent with the brush the impression he has directly received from nature, synthesized by his fantasy, he does not put on the canvas the remembrance of a past sensation, but describes a present sensation. . . . In his paintings perspective does not exist; in them there are nothing but harmonies suggested by form, and registers which succeed themselves, to compose a general harmony which fills the rectangle that constitutes the picture.

"Following the same philosophical system in dealing with light, as the one he follows in regard to form, to him color does not exist, but only the effects of light. This produces in matter certain vibrations, which produce in the individual certain impressions. From this it results that Picasso's paintings present to us the evolution by which light and form have operated in developing themselves in his brain to produce the idea, and his composition is nothing but the synthetic expression of his emotion."

Thus it will be seen that he tries to represent in essence what

seems to exist only in substance. And, inasmuch as his psychical impressions inspire in him geometrical sensations, certain of these exhibits are in the nature of geometrical abstractions that have little or nothing in common with anything hitherto produced in art. Its whole tendency would appear to be away from art into the realm of metaphysics.

Here is a design, a pattern of triangles, ellipses and semi-circles that at first glance appears to be little more than the incoherent passage of a compass across the paper in the hands of some absent-minded engineer. After a little attentive study, however, these enigmatic lines resolve themselves into the semblance of a human figure and one begins to discover a clearly defined intention behind this apparent chaos of ideated sensations. There is evident a method in his madness which, after all, may only be truth turned inside out. And this is what should make one pause and investigate the matter further.

The fact that one may get nothing out of it as yet in the way of tangible or even vaguely experienced emotions is beside the point. The interest in this whole matter rests on the fact that here is revealed a new form of aesthetic expression as yet only tentative and groping perhaps, but reaching out in new directions. And it must not be forgotten that the pioneer is usually misunderstood; he is so far in advance of current ideas as to be out of touch with his fellow men who might appropriately be called follow-men, they lag so far behind the progress of new ideas. Cézanne and Picasso — they mark the parting of the ways: a fulfilment and a promise. Quo Vadis? *

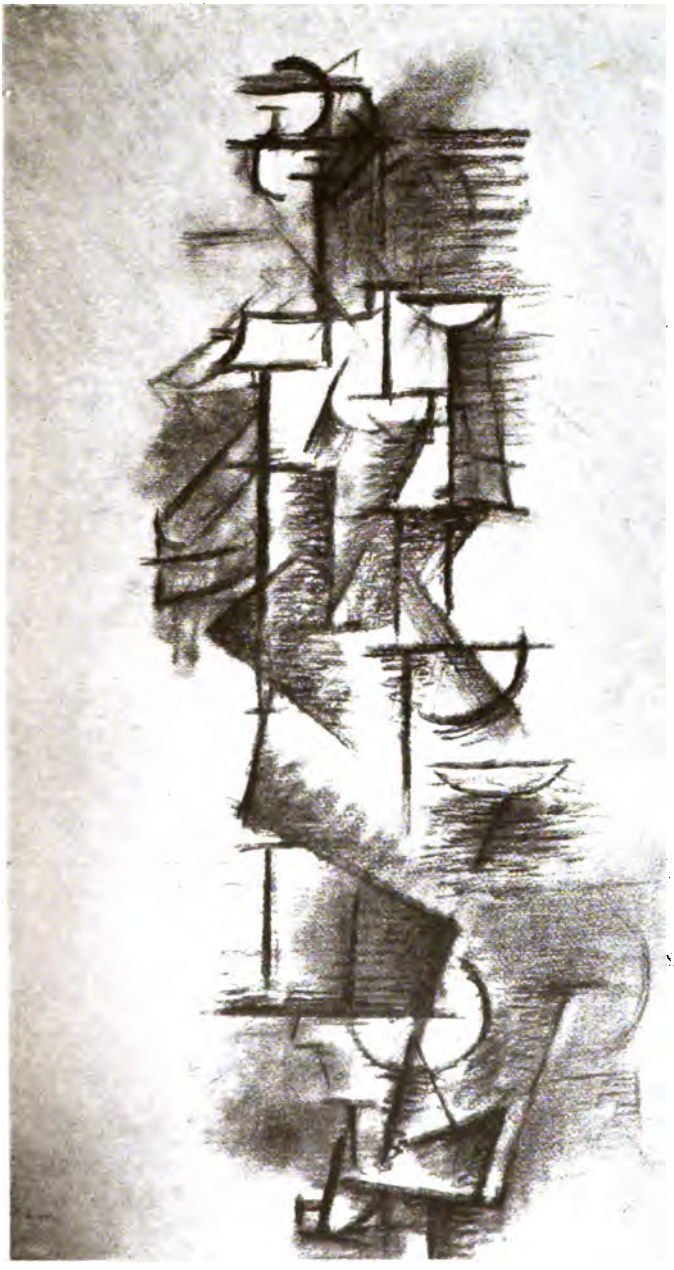
◆ ◆ ◆

Not many years ago Picasso was painting under the influence of the pointillists. Almost every year he changed his style, until he developed the pure, the geometrical Cubism of the drawing shown herein. He had a period of painting very uninteresting blue portraits, one of which was shown at the exhibition.

His "Woman with the Mustard Pot" belongs with his sculpture, which is interesting but, to most people, ugly.

He has such phenomenal powers of absorption and his technical facility is such that he does anything he pleases

* J. N. Laurvik, in "Boston Evening Transcript."



PICASSO
Drawing

with ease, and what he does today is no sure indication of what he will attempt tomorrow.

For the moment he seems absorbed in the *music of planes,* so to speak. Take, for instance, a still life wherein there seem to be a pipe, a wall, a musical instrument, a glass, something like a stairway, street signs, etc. These may or may not have been the objects the painter had before him, but whether they are or not it is quite clear that he was not content with dealing with superficial planes, that is, with the visible lines and surfaces of the objects, but he *lets the planes project and intersect* very much as if the objects were semi-transparent.

To state the matter in other words—by using only the essential lines of an object and treating the object as otherwise more or less transparent, one readily understands why the essential lines of all objects *in the rear show through,* and the result is a confused mass of planes with here and there more conspicuous surface indications such as the pipe, the signs, the glass, etc.

In much of Picasso's later work he suppresses all such surface indications, until only a few absolutely elemental lines remain.

The result is a picture so scientific, so abstract, it appeals to but few and excites no emotion in anyone because it was not the result of emotion in the artist.

In short, Picasso and a few followers have reached a degree of abstraction in the suppression of the real and the particular that their pictures represent about the same degree of emotion as the demonstration of a difficult geometrical proposition.

Beyond the few lines they use there is the bare canvas; they have reached the limit and they must turn in their tracks. The reaction is bound to come, and come quickly.

Meanwhile the Cubists, who have been painting along emotional, as distinguished from the coldly scientific lines, are still turning out pictures that possess a charm in line and color irrespective of their theoretical significance and much may still be done in this direction.

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The Cubists are fond of quoting the following from Plato:

Socrates: What I am saying is not, indeed, directly obvious. I must therefore try to make it clear. For I will endeavor to speak of the beauty of figures, not as the majority of persons understand them such as those of animals, and some paintings to the life; but as reason says, I allude to something straight and round, and the figures formed from them by the turner's lathe, both superficial and solid and those by the plumb-line and the angle-rule, if you understand me. For these, I say, are not beautiful for a particular purpose, as other things are; but are by nature ever beautiful by themselves, and possess certain peculiar pleasures, not at all similar to those from scratching; and colors possessing this character are beautiful and have similar pleasures. —From "Philebus."

◈ ◈ ◈

Every really great painter must have moments when, as he thinks of the days and years spent painting *things*—just things for people to look at and see—he asks himself, "Is it worth while to spend all one's life painting things one *sees?* Is it not possible to paint the things one *feels?*"

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Sargent is tired of portrait painting—why? Because he longs to do something else. But what he is doing is simply another form of portrait painting—and not so big. He has simply turned from men and women to chairs and tables—so to speak; that is, from portraits of people to pictures of things—all the same art. So far as any one knows he has not tried to make compositions of line and color that would be beautiful in themselves. In short, great painter as he is, he seems to lack the ambition or the inspiration to try to do

what Whistler for more than forty years was trying to do—lift painting from the rut of reality to a plane more nearly on a level with that occupied by the greatest masters of China and Japan.

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The following paragraphs from a little book on Cubism by two well known Cubist painters throw some light on the subject:

> We should be the first to blame those who, to hide their incapacity, should attempt to fabricate puzzles. Systematic obscurity betrays itself by its persistence. Instead of a veil which the mind gradually draws aside as it adventures toward progressive wealth, it is merely a curtain hiding a void.
>
> It is not surprising that people ignorant of painting should not spontaneously share our assurance; but nothing is more absurd than that they should be irritated thereby. Must the painter, to please them, turn back in his work, restore things to the commonplace appearance from which it is his mission to deliver them?
>
> From the fact that the object is truly transubstantiated, so that the most accustomed eye has some difficulty in discovering it, a great charm results. The picture which only surrenders itself slowly seems always to wait until we interrogate it, as though it reserved an infinity of replies to an infinity of questions.*

By way of comment on this paragraph:

Why should we deny to painting one of the greatest charms of poetry—*elusiveness?*

Great poetry is *rarely* superficially plain to the casual reader.

Great music is *never* superficially plain to the casual hearer.

But the attitude of the public is that great painting shall always be superficially plain to the casual observer.

A painter may paint things every one understands at a glance, but is it not his *right,* if he wishes, to paint things no one understands but himself?

* "Cubism," Gleizes and Metzinger (Eng. Edition).

In other words, what right have *we* to say to the poet, "If you don't write things we understand you are no poet," or to the painter, "If you don't paint things we understand you are no painter?"

The only difference between poet and painter is that one uses a *pen,* the other a *brush* to express *himself.*

◆ ◆ ◆

excellent

Without employing any allegorical or symbolical literary artifice, merely by inflections of lines and colors, a painter can show, *in the same picture,* a Chinese city, a French town, together with mountains, oceans, fauna, and flora, and nations with their histories and their desires—all that separates them in external reality. Distance or time, concrete fact, or pure conception, nothing refuses to be uttered in the language of the painter, as in that of the poet, the musician, or the scientist.

Here is a most significant statement of a *truth* and an assertion of *freedom.*

We all know how the poet in a dozen lines may give us glimpses of the universe; he may leap from flower to star, from city to city, nation to nation, age to age; nothing confines him, he knows no restraint.

In one short poem he may give us glimpses of the four quarters of the globe—of Athens, London, Chicago, Pekin. His imagination knows no bounds, his art is unlimited.

For the first time in the history of painting painters are systematically claiming the same independence, the same right to *express themselves freely* in each canvas, to paint in the one picture *if they see fit* glimpses of different countries, cities, scenes, different times as well as places; to use them and suggest them as freely as the poet does *to express a mood*—and why not?

But the painter must be sure of his mood, and be doubly sure that what he is trying to say *requires* a wealth of illustration, otherwise his painting will be but a fantastic jumble,

MARC
The Steer

KANDINSKY
Landscape With Two Poplars

just as many poems lose themselves in not a *wealth* but a *confused mass* of irrelevant illustrations.

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The *assertion* of freedom is one thing, the *exercise* of it is quite another.

The point is that, fundamentally, there is no reason why a painter should not show in one canvas things and events unrelated in either space or time, leaving the observer to work out the more or less hidden meaning of it all.

There is no reason why he should be tied down to the realistic painting of an apple or an apple tree if he prefers to paint some flight of the imagination into which apple and apple tree enter together with strange glimpses of temples and pyramids, playing children and armed battalions, weeping women and fighting men.

Read the foregoing lines once more. Eight objects are mentioned — apple, apple tree, temples, pyramids, children, battalions, weeping women, fighting men — by no possibility could these strangely diverse objects be found grouped together in actual life, yet it is safe to say that *as you read them* no feeling of utter incongruity was experienced. On the contrary your imagination unconsciously created a picture, vague and indistinct because fleeting, which combined them all, possibly a strange, poetic scene with orchards and playing children, temples and pyramids in the distance, with armed battalions, weeping women and fighting men passing by in clouds or fanciful shapes.

Thousands of such pictures are painted every year and they are mostly rather poor works of the imagination.

There is, however, no reason why the same freedom, the same arbitrary indifference to actualities, should not be exercised in the painting of good pictures.

No reason why, for instance, painters should not *experi-*

ment freely with all the so-called laws of art, and that is what the Cubists and others of the moderns are doing.

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That the ultimate aim of painting is to touch the crowd we have admitted; but painting must not address the crowd in the language of the crowd; it must employ its own language, in order to move, dominate, and direct the crowd, not in order to be understood. It is so with religions and philosophies. The artist who concedes nothing, who does not explain himself and relates nothing, accumulates an internal strength whose radiance shines on every hand.

It is in consummating ourselves within ourselves that we shall purify humanity; it is by increasing our own riches that we shall enrich others; it is by kindling the heart of the star for our own pleasure that we shall exalt the universe.

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To explain Cubism, or any attempt in art to suppress the objective, one must fall back on music.

Grieg calls a certain composition "In the Hall of the Mountain King." Not for a moment did he attempt realistically to suggest a hall, a mountain, a king or any object; to have done so would have been folly. And if that particular composition were played for the first time before a body of keen musicians, no title mentioned, and not a word said about its being a part of the Peer Gynt suite, no two would agree as to what the composer had in mind, though many might have very interesting impressions regarding the *mood of the composer in writing it.*

But once understand it is part of the Peer Gynt suite and once told it is "In the Hall of the Mountain King," the weird and fascinating music explains itself, it is recognized as a wonderfully successful attempt to realize an impressive scene by a combination of sounds.

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The veriest tyro in music feels the cheapness of imitative music, the imitation of the nightingale, the ripple of notes

to imitate a rippling brook, the beating of a drum to imitate thunder, the tremolo of violins to represent fright, etc., etc.

From such bald attempts at realism to the abstract beauty of a symphony by Beethoven is a vast interval.

The severely logical composer will not name his symphony for fear of suggesting ideas that will interfere with the pure enjoyment of his abstract conception. There have been painters — like Whistler — who preferred to call their works "Harmonies" or "Arrangements" or "Studies" rather than subject their canvases to a clamoring horde of suggestions by choosing names that must inevitably divert the observer.

However at times a name helps, it at least puts us on the right track, it enables us to measure the piece of music or the picture by the artist's intention. If it is utterly impossible for the best and most sympathetic minds after long study to find any suggestion of the title in the work, it means either the artist has been unsuccessful in conveying his idea in sound or in line and color, or — what often happens — he has carelessly and arbitrarily chosen a title after his work was finished, a title that imperfectly fits his original impulse.

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It is most disappointing to hear a man go into raptures over what he cannot explain.

The greatest enemies of the moderns are their friends. But there have been published a number of books in German and French that are well worth reading if approached with an open mind.

If read with preconceived notions and prejudices the result will be very irritating. Several artists, notably Kandinsky, have taken the utmost pains to explain in print what they believe and what they are trying to do.

But it is often quite as difficult to understand some of

the things the painters write about their work as it is to understand their pictures; but this is because some of the new men carry their theories so far it is hard for the layman to follow, however earnest and sympathetic his efforts.

But because we do not understand what a man says is no good reason for calling him an ignoramus.

The trouble *may* be with him, it is *probably* with us. At all events each re-reading, like each re-scrutiny of the pictures, yields clearer results.

To a man *really and profoundly interested* in art nothing has occurred in many a generation so full of significance, so worthy one's earnest attention, as the present new movements — all the more interesting because changing so rapidly and because some of them are certain to be so fleeting.

The art institute which does not secure and preserve some examples illustrative of the extraordinary upheaval in the art world is derelict — as derelict as a natural history museum would be if it passed over indifferently the evidence of some mysterious upheaval in nature.

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When a man stands before a cubist painting or an improvisation by Kandinsky and says he sees all sorts of things in it, do not take him too seriously; he is like members of those extraordinary Browning Clubs who destroy our enjoyment of the poetry by reading into each line things the poet never dreamed. Robert Frost

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The Cubists and most of the moderns are very young men, what they *think* is of far less interest than what they *do*.

What a young man does is often of vital importance, what he thinks may be of no importance at all — save to himself.

Moved by the most naive theories and enthusiasms youth

CHABAUD
Cemetery Gates

will do wonderful things, things the sober reflection of age would fear to do.

One of the charms of the Cubists is their child-like faith in the absolute supremacy of their art; this faith is interesting in them because it leads them to produce works that cause us to stop and look and think, but when their followers indulge the same blind faith in print their utterances are mostly incoherent and boresome.

The violent partisan who sees all sorts of things in the modern painting is at one extreme, the violent opponent who sees nothing at all is at the other—let them fight it out.

The truth lies midway, that there is *something* worth finding in even the most extravagant attempts of the new movement no thoughtful man will deny. The very fact the paintings attract such crowds and excite so much controversy proves there is *something* for serious investigation; the something may not turn out to be of overwhelming importance, but it will have its influence upon the future of art.

No one for a moment doubts that the exhibitions held in New York, Chicago, and Boston are destined to have a very great effect upon American art, especially upon the art of the men most bitterly opposed to Cubism, and everything akin to Cubism. The academic has received a severe but healthful jolt.

Whatever affects us has, at least, the merit of *affecting* us, and whatever moves us to do better work, whether in an old way or a new way, has the merit of *affecting us for good.*

VII

THE NEW ART IN MUNICH

"WE cling more closely to the old masters; what we are doing is simply the natural development of their principles and their methods," said a well-known painter of Munich while speaking of the Cubists and other moderns of Paris, and the words had direct reference to the head of a woman, by Jawlenski, reproduced herein in color.

It would be difficult to convince the casual observer that this head has any relationship to portraits by Titian, *and yet*—

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The Cubists are also equally quick to demonstrate the logical connection between their works and those of the old masters, tracing the connection through Courbet, El Greco, and so on.

The truth, of course, is that *everything* modern is a development of *something* ancient, that *nothing* exists *unrelated.*

Art is as *continuous* as everything else in life and nature. One thing flows inevitably out of another.

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Sorolla and Zoloaga are the children of Velasquez. Puvis de Chavannes may seem nearer Raphael and the Italian Primitives than Degas and Manet, but he is simply the fruition of one collateral line, while Degas is the fruition of another, and Manet of another—*they are all painters,* and the art of painting admits endless variations in theory and technic.

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It is, therefore, true that every modern experiment, how-

ever strange, may trace its genealogy to the Old Masters and through them to the Primitives, and through them to the Cave Painters.

So that when a Munich artist argues that the strange heads of Jawlensky and the still stranger compositions of Kandinsky are based upon the best there is in Italian art, the proposition in its broad significance may be conceded and plenty of room be still left for startling differences between the art of Venice in the sixteenth century and that of Munich in the twentieth.

There is, however, some slight but tangible foundation for the assertion that the work of the extreme men of Munich is closer to that of the Old Masters than the work of the extreme men of Paris, in that most of the former paint more *solidly* and *substantially*, while most of the latter paint more *lightly* and *superficially*—just about the difference that exists between the two cities, the two environments. The worker in Munich cannot help being influenced by the *German* atmosphere, the worker in Paris cannot help being influenced by the *French*—in fact each is where he is because he finds the particular atmosphere congenial.

"The New Artists' Federation," in Munich, was founded in January, 1909, by Adolf Erbslöh, Alexej von Jawlensky, Wassily Kandinsky, Alexander Kanoldt, Alfred Kubin, Gabriele Münter, Marianna von Werefkin, Heinrich Schnabel, and Oskar Wittenstein. During the first year Paul Baum, Wladimir von Bechtejeff, Erma Bossi, Karl Hofer, Moissey Koga, and Albert Sacharoff joined. Paul Baum and Karl Hofer soon resigned their membership. In 1910 the Frenchmen, Pierre Girieud and Le Fauconnier, became members,

and in 1911 Franz Marc and Otto Fischer, followed in 1912 by Alexander Mogilewsky.

The first exhibition was held in the winter of 1909 in the Modern Gallery, Munich. Indignation and derisive laughter, and insults from the press were the outward result. Still the seed scattered was not lost. Similar exhibitions were held in many cities of Germany and Switzerland. Everywhere they met with opposition, but also made some friends at each place.

The second exhibition, held in the fall of the following year, brought the members into contact with a large number of outside artists, some of whom have become of great importance in the new art, and most of whom were, up to that time, unknown in Germany. These were the Germans, Hermann Haller, Bernhard Hoetger, Eugen Kahler, Adolf Nieder; the Frenchmen, Georges Bracque, André Derain, Kees Van Dongen, Francisco Durio, Pablo Picasso, Georges Rouault, and Maurice de Vlaminck; finally, the Russians, Mogilewsky, David and Wladimir Burljuk, and Seraphim Sudbinin. This was the first exhibition at which it was possible to rightly estimate the development and the international character of the new movement.

The preparations for the exhibition in the year 1911 led to a split. Some of the members insisted that, as regarded their works, the custom of a jury should be dispensed with, while others were in favor of having the entries rigidly judged in order to insure proper selection. Kandinsky, Kubin, Marc, and Gabriele Münter in consequence announced their withdrawal from the federation. Thus a difference of opinion and convictions was openly vented that had existed in secret for quite a time. The members named, under the name of "Redaktion des Blauen Reiters," opened a separate exhibition and have since continued to work under this banner.

The New Artists' Federation, since its third exhibition in 1912, has held a series of exhibits of the works of individual artists in its rooms at Munich, and its members are represented at nearly all important exhibitions in Germany and Switzerland.*

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The key-note of the modern movement in art is *expression of self;* that is, the expression of one's *inner self* as distinguished from the representation of the outer world.

* "Das Neue Bild," by Otto Fischer, pp. 22, 23. Since the war there has been another "Secession." "Secession" is a habit in Munich.

MATISSE
Woman in Red Madras

I have before me six of Jawlensky's heads, painted a year or so apart. They range from almost conventional portrait studies in strong impressionistic manner to heads very like Matisse's "Madras Rouge," thence to the head reproduced, which was the last painted.

The series shows an interesting development of the painter's *convictions,* his technic remains essentially the same, facile and competent, only the latest picture places a much greater stress upon his resources.

It was apparent from things in his studio, canvases ten or twelve years old, that he could have made a commercial success as a painter of portraits.

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To say that Jawlensky's latest heads with their strange, expressive, exaggerated eyes are not wholly new one has only to turn to any work on Greek painting wherein are reproduced some of the encaustic and tempera portraits found in the Fayum some twenty-odd years ago.

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When asked why he preferred his latest work to the earlier, Jawlensky said:

"I have put more of myself into them; they are more expressive of what I feel."

And he went on to say the development seemed to him natural and logical. He could not understand why the heads should strike others as queer or laughable since they were the products of absolute sincerity.

Of his work a friendly critic says:

Jawlensky, formerly an officer in the Russian army, resigned a captain's commission and turned to painting. Today he looks back into an artistic past rich in changes and just as rich in successes achieved. Gauguin, VanGogh and Cézanne have given much to him; more recently, oriental and primitive art, Byzantine pictures and antique German woodcarvings have not been without influence on

him. His color is peculiarly his own, with its limpidity, its bloom, and bold modulations, the spontaneous, expressive force of which have a most refreshing effect. In its soft and surprising beauty one may perhaps discover a distinctly Russian quality. It is almost an injustice toward this artist's pictures to reproduce them colorless. His still-life pictures excel in composition and charm by their color effects. In his landscapes a peculiar mood finds expression, always striking, always original, and often with great simplicity and beauty. His heads and half figures might be termed snapshots of the soul: a pose, a motion, a glance of the eye, retained by the briefest and most effective means. Here, too, a conscious simplifying and exaggeration becomes more and more evident. For this artist, art itself has the grace of a gesture; the soul part immediately becomes expression, and thus is shown everywhere the creative quality of an impulsive nature that owes its best to the inspiration of the moment, and from it proceeds to work with a most happy facility.*

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Marianna von Werefkin, a Russian, uses water color, gouache, and prefers the mystery of the night to daylight. Her pictures are interesting human documents. She does not seek startling or novel pictured effects.

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There is another and almost unknown artist, P. Klee, who is very highly esteemed by the most advanced men. There is certainly an exquisite refinement to his line; it is so alive it scintillates.

Gabriele Münter has a vision of things quite her own, a sense of humor and of life that penetrates beneath the surface, and that manifests itself in a technic that is, one might say, almost nonchalant.

A. Bloch is a young American, living in Munich, who has allied himself with the Blue Knights and made an impression by his very personal expressions. He was given a one-man exhibition in Berlin in December last, and his pictures were highly praised in a well-written article in the Berlin *Borsen-*

* "Das Neue Bild," p. 34.

Courier. Absolute and unswerving fidelity to one's ideals is the only sure road to success, and this sort of sincerity is manifest in the work of Bloch.

Franz Marc was in a class by himself. He was the animal painter of the Blue Knights, and his pictures have a fairly steady sale notwithstanding they are extreme in conception and execution. Animal forms and their phases of composition seemed to appeal to him, but he often used the forms as arbitrarily as Matisse uses his nudes to secure an effect of life or grace. His color is always delightful, and there is a flow, a rhythm to his pictures that is fascinating.

In an article in "Der Blaue Reiter" he says:

> It is remarkable how *spiritual* acquisitions are valued so differently by men as compared with *material*. If someone conquers a new colony for his country everybody applauds; if, however, someone has the *inspiration* to give to mankind a new and purely spiritual value, it is rejected with scorn and indignation, the gift is suspected, and the people try to suppress and crush it. Is not this a frightful condition?

And speaking of the new movement in art, which he considers a *spiritual* offering to the public, he says:

> The public is against us, with scorn and abuse it refuses our pictures; but we may be right. They may not want our gifts, but perhaps they cannot help accepting them. We have the consciousness that our world of ideas is no card house with which we play, but it contains the vital elements of a *movement* the vibrations of which are felt today *the world* over.

In the orthodox sense these men may or may not be religious — I do not know — but one thing is certain, there is an immense amount of religious power in their propaganda.

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The most extreme man not only of Munich but of the entire modern art movement is Wassily Kandinsky, also a Russian.

There was one of his Improvisations in the International Exhibition.*

It did not hang with the Cubists, not even in the large room with Matisse and other radical men. Evidently those in charge of the hanging did not know what to make of it or what to do with it, so they side-tracked it on a wall that was partly in shadow. Visitors who paused to look at it dismissed it as meaningless splotches of paint, and passed on.

There is this to be said for the public, that with no word of explanation one of Kandinsky's Improvisations does seem—*at first glance*—the last word in extravagance; on fourth or fifth glance it appears to have a charm of color that is fascinating; on *study* it begins to *sound* like color music.

There were three of his canvases in the London Exhibition in Albert Hall in July, 1913, "Landscape with Two Poplars," "Improvisation No. 29," and "Improvisation No. 30," the last reproduced herein in color.

Of these three paintings a critic said: †

By far the best pictures there seemed to me to be the three works by Kandinsky. They are of peculiar interest, because one is a landscape in which the disposition of the forms is clearly prompted by a thing seen, while the other two are improvisations. In these the forms and colors have no possible justification, except the rightness of their relations. This, of course, is really true of all art, but where representation of natural form comes in, the senses are apt to be tricked into acquiescence by the intelligence. In these improvisations, therefore, the form has to stand the test without any adventitious aids. It seemed to me that they did this, and established their right to be what they were. In fact, these seemed to me the most complete pictures in the exhibition, to be those which had the most definite and coherent expressive power. Undoubtedly representation, besides the evocative power which it has through association of ideas,

* It was purchased by Mr. Alfred Stieglitz.
† Roger Fry in "The Nation," August 2, 1913.

KANDINSKY
Improvisation No. 29

has also a value in assisting us to coordinate forms, and, until Picasso and Kandinsky tried to do without it, this function at least was always regarded as a necessity. That is why of the three pictures by Kandinsky, the landscape strikes one most at first. Even if one does not recognize it as a landscape, it is easier to find one's way about in it, because the forms have the same sort of relations as the forms of nature, whereas in the two others there is no reminiscence of the general structure of the visible world. The landscape is easier, but that is all. As one contemplates the three, one finds that after a time the improvisations become more definite, more logical and more closely knit in structure, more surprisingly beautiful in their color oppositions, more exact in their equilibrium. *They are pure visual music.*

People who do not find a *picture* turn away disappointed and irritated, but many turn back to look again, attracted by the strength and charm of the compositions, and in the end not a few reluctantly concede, "Yes, they have fine color, but—" and then follows the old demand for some familiar object as anchorage.

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Of Kandinsky's qualifications from the academic point of view let it be said he is a superb draftsman, though he no longer attaches any importance to drawing *per se;* and he is a master of color combinations.

I have at hand some of his earlier work along conventional lines, and I have seen tempera drawings of Moroccan scenes that would delight a Whistler, they are so delicate and so filled with subtle charm. Then I have a series of sketches, extending over a number of years, which show the development of his later works.

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He has explained his theories at length in his book,*

* Second edition, Munich, R. Piper & Co., 1912. English translation by M. T. H. Sadler, London, 1914, "The Art of Spiritual Harmony."

"Ueber das Geistege in der Kunst," and in numerous articles, notably in "Der Blaue Reiter."

The keynote of the entire modern movement is found in the first sentence of his book,

"*Every work of art is the child of its own times.*"

A man may so steep himself in history and tradition that all he does is reminiscent of the past, but such work marks no progress and such men are negligible factors in the advancement of mankind.

It is the man who yields himself to *his times,* who absorbs all there is of good in the *life about him,* who sees everything, feels everything, who mingles with his respect for the achievements of the past a mighty admiration for the triumphs of the present—such a man is a leader among his fellows; brilliant thinker, daring adventurer, he blazes the way for the timid to follow.

If we were Greeks of the fifth century we would carve the marbles they did. If we were Romans under the Caesars we would build the buildings they built. If we were Christians of the middle ages we would rear cathedrals. If we were English, French, German, Chinese, or Japanese, we would do the things they do, like the things they like. But we are none of these peoples; we are Americans living in an age of steam and electricity, of automobiles and aeroplanes, in an age of kaleidoscopic changes, of marvelous and startling developments.

What *must* happen in painting, music, sculpture?

Exactly what has happened in architecture.

Painting, music, sculpture that will go with our mighty steel buildings, with our factories and railroads.

Painting, music, sculpture varied in form, as old and as new as the brain of man can conceive, but always and essen-

tially *our own.* That is the secret, it must be characteristic of our age — *our own.*

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This is not a placid age.

It is an age of feverish activities, brilliant imaginings, profound emotions.

Hence our art will not be placid, but will be an art of the imagination and the emotions.

Venturesome souls will not be content to paint things, or even people, but they will paint *themselves,* not their *outer* selves, but their *inner;* they will put on canvas what they *feel.* That is as near the final word in art as man can utter — to *paint* instead of *speak* his most subtle emotions.

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In a recent article* Kandinsky summarises part of his theory as follows:

A work of art consists of two elements, the *inner* and the *outer.*

The inner is the emotion in the soul of the artist. This emotion has the power to arouse a similar feeling in the soul of the observer.

The soul being connected with the body it is affected through the medium of the senses — feelings; emotions are stirred and aroused by sensations. Hence our sensations are the bridge, the physical connection between the *immaterial,* the emotion in the soul of the artist, to the *material,* resulting in the production of the work of art.

And again the sensations are the bridge from the *material,* the artist, and his work, to the *immaterial,* emotion in the soul of the observer.

The sequence is, *emotion* (in artist) — sensations — *work* — sensations — *emotion* (in observer).

* "Der Sturm," Berlin.

The two emotions will be like and equal to the extent the *work* is successful. In this respect a painting is no different from a song, each is a message; the successful singer succeeds in arousing in his hearers the emotions he feels; the successful painter should do no less.

The inner element, emotion, must exist, else the work will be a sham. The inner element determines the *character* of the work.

In order that the inner element which at first exists only as an emotion, may develop into work, the *second* element — the *outer* is used as the embodiment. Therefore emotion is always seeking means of expression, seeking a material form, a form that can stir the senses.*

The *vital,* the *determining* element is the *inner,* that controls the outer form, even as the idea in the mind determines the words we use, and not the words the idea.

Therefore the selection of the *form* of a work of art is determined by the *inner* irresistible force — this is the only unchangeable *law* of art.

A *beautiful* work is the product of the harmonious cooperation of the two elements, the inner and outer. A painting, for instance, is an intellectual organism which, like every material organism, consists of many parts.

These single parts, if isolated, are as lifeless as a finger severed from the hand.

The single parts live only through the whole.

The endless number of single parts in a painting is divided into two groups:

1. The *designed* form.
2. The *picturesque* form.

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An examination of a work of art, especially a painting,

* See pages 87-88 for quotation from "Delight; the Soul of Art."

VAN GOGH
Woman with Frying Pan

VAN GOGH
Chair with Pipe

usually discovers the presence of parts and forms drawn from *nature,* from *objects.*

As the *imitation* of natural forms forms no part of the definition of pure art how is it these objective representations creep in?

The origin of painting was the same as that of the other arts, and of every human action. It was *purely practical.*

If a native hunter chases game for days, he is induced to do so by *hunger.*

If today a princely hunter chases game, he is induced to do so by the desire for *enjoyment.* Just as hunger is of *bodily* value, here the enjoyment is of *aesthetic* value.

If a savage requires artificial sounds for his dance, he is induced thereto by sexual impulse. The artificial sounds, from which through centuries the music of today developed, moved savages to an expression of passion in the form of dancing.

If the man of today attends a concert he is not seeking the music for *practical* results, but *pleasure.*

Also here the original *practical* motive changed to the *aesthetic.* That means that also here the practical want of the *body* changed to that of the *soul.*

During this progress toward refinement (or spirituality) of the most simple practical (or bodily) wants, two consequences are to be noticed throughout: The *separation* of the spiritual *from* the bodily element and its further *independent development* through the different arts.

Here the above mentioned laws (of the inner element and the form) gradually apply with ever increasing force, until finally out of each art comes a *pure* art.

This is a steady, logical, natural growth, like the growth of a tree.

The process is to be noticed in painting.

First period, *Origin: Practical* desire to make use of *physical.*

Second Period, *Development:* The gradual separation of this *practical* purpose, and the gradual ascendancy of the *spiritual* element.

Third Period, *Aim:* The attainment of a higher stage in *pure art;* in this the remains of the practical desire are *totally separated* (abstracted). Pure art speaks from soul to soul, it is not dependent upon the use of objective and imitative forms.

We can distinguish all of these three stages in various combinations in paintings of today.

First Period: *Realistic Painting.* The realism here is understood to be such as developed traditionally into the nineteenth century—the *practical* desire to exhibit objective realities—portraits, landscapes, historical paintings, etc., in the direct sense.

Second Period: *Naturalistic Paintings* in the form of Impressionism, of the New Impressionism and Expressionism —to which partly Cubism and Futurism belongs: The separation of the *practical* aim and the *general preponderance* of the *spiritual element;* from Impressionism through Neo-Impressionism to Expressionism always increasing separation and always increasing preponderance of the spiritual.

Apparently in this finer development *nature* as such is no more taken into consideration; but this is only "apparently" so, for as a matter of fact nature is used as a motive, a background, a basis for the pictures, and if the attempt is made to separate the natural or *objective* part of the picture from the purely artistic, the result is the picture falls for lack of support.

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In other words, in most of even the very abstract paint-

ings, such as even Picasso's, there is a foundation, a background of objects without which the pictures would not exist.

Picasso may refine a "Woman with a Mandolin," to a dozen intersecting lines that disclose neither woman nor mandolin, but *both* were present in his mind's eye when he created his work, and without them the work has no reason for existing.

It is here that one begins to understand Kandinsky's attitude, and how diametrically he diverges from Picasso. The two have nothing in common save the desire to produce more abstract art, but Picasso abstractions are based on the *outer* world, while Kandinsky's are based on the *inner*.

When Picasso has refined nature, that is, things *outside* him, to the *last degree,* to the simplest mode of expression in line and mass, he has reached an *impasse,* further progress is impossible, further scientific subdivision in unattainable, his art in *that direction* is finished.

But Kandinsky has before him an unlimited view. With him the elimination of nature, of all things *physical* from his compositions, simply gives him greater freedom in the painting of compositions representing things — moods — *spiritual.*

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To go on with his own explanation, not in his exact words, but in substance:

It is thus seen that in both the first and second signs in the development of art, the objective foundation or background is not of simply secondary importance, but of *first;* it is essential because without it the work would not exist.

To create *pure art* it is necessary to eliminate this background of the physical, and substitute for it *pure artistic form,* which alone can give the picture independent life.

This step we find in the *dawning third period* of painting —*Compositional painting.*

According to the scheme of the three periods, we have arrived at the third one—which was designated as the *Aim.*

In the *compositional painting* which is developing today we see the signs of the attainment of the higher step of *pure art,* in which the remains of the *practical* desire (all evidences of objectivity) can be perfectly separated, which can speak from soul to soul in purely artistic language.

The conscious and oftentimes also still unconscious striving, which strongly (and ever stronger) shows itself today, to replace the objective (subject paintings) by pure construction (pure composition) is the first sign of the dawning of that *pure art* to which the past art periods inevitably led.

I have been trying to briefly deal with the entire development and more especially the situation today in broad schematic outlines; therefore there are many deficiencies (gaps) which necessarily remain uncovered, and there are passed over many interesting lesser developments, which are inevitable in progress, like smaller branches on the tree, which extend outward notwithstanding the tree's growth upward.

The further development, which is pending in painting, will still have to suffer many seeming contradictions and diversions, as was the case with music, which today we know already as pure art.

The past teaches us that the development of humanity consists in the increasing *spirituality* of various factors. Among these factors art takes the first place.

Among the arts painting is following the road that leads it from the *practical*-efficiency to the *intellectual*-efficiency. From the *subject-picture* to the *pure composition.*

To better understand the foregoing take the "Improvisation No. 30." *

It is a very pure example of *compositional* painting, but it

* It should be stated that the brilliant colors of the original are very inadequately shown in the reproduction for the reason the painting is so large it does not reproduce well so small.

is not *absolutely pure,* in that it contains many more or less obvious suggestions of familiar forms and objects.

Some workmen who happened to be handling the paintting, referred to it as the "War Picture," and many casual observers insist it is an impression of war or of a battle field.

This is because two cannon are quite plain in the lower right-hand corner, and the two oblong blue masses projecting from the cannons' mouths would seem to be the smoke of the discharges.

Then, too, the seeming cataclysmic effect, the suggestion of a helmet, a tottering tower, banners, aérial flashes or fireworks, all accentuate the impression of conflict and explosions.

If one looks long enough in this mood it is not difficult to read into the canvas all sorts of interpretations of a warlike character.

Yet the painting was "improvised"—*composed* with no *direct* intention of suggesting war.

In his own personal note book wherein he keeps a record of all his work, Kandinsky identifies the picture by a hasty pencil sketch and the words, "Blue Splashes," or "Masses," and "Cannons."

Of the painting he says in a letter:

> The designation "Cannons," selected by me *for my own use,* is not to be conceived as indicating the "contents" of the picture.
>
> These contents are indeed what the spectator *lives,* or *feels* while under the effect of the *form and color combinations* of the picture. This picture is nearly in the shape of a cross. The centre — somewhat below the middle — is formed by a large, irregular blue plane. (The blue color in itself counteracts the impression caused by the cannons!) Below this centre there is a muddy-gray, ragged second centre almost equal in importance to the first one. The four corners extending the oblique cross into the corners of the picture are heavier than the two centres, especially heavier than the first, and they vary from each other in characteristics, in lines, contours, and colors.

Thus the picture becomes lighter, or looser in the centre, and heavier, or tighter towards the corners.

The scheme of the construction is thus toned down, even made invisible for many, by the looseness of the forms. Larger or smaller remains of *objectivity* (the cannons, for instance) produce in the spectator that secondary tone which objects call forth in all who feel.

The presence of the cannons in the picture could probably be explained by the constant war talk that had been going on throughout the year. But I did not intend to give a representation of war; to do so would have required different pictorial means; besides, such tasks do not interest me — at least not just now.

This entire description is chiefly an analysis of the picture which I have painted rather subconsciously in a state of strong inner tension. So intensively did I feel the necessity of some of the forms, that I remember having given loud voiced directions to myself, as for instance: "But the corners must be heavy!" In such cases it is of importance exactly to discern all things, the weight, for instance, by the feeling. Generally speaking, I might almost declare that where the feeling that lies in the soul, in the eye, and in the hand is strong enough to faultlessly determine the finest measurements and weights, "schematism" and the much-dreaded "consciosity" will not become dangerous. On the contrary, in this case, the said elements will even prove immeasurably beneficial.

I would that all my pictures might be judged exclusively from this point of view, and that the non-essentials might completely disappear from the judgment.

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In subsequent letters he said:

Whatever I might say about myself or my pictures can touch the *pure artistic meaning* only *superficially*. The observer must learn to look at the picture as a graphic representation of a *mood* and not as a representation of *objects*.

◆ ◆ ◆

All that anyone can say about pictures, and what I might say myself, can touch the contents, the *pure artistic meaning*, of a picture *only superficially*. Each spectator for himself must learn to view the picture *solely* as a graphic representation of a mood, passing over as unimportant such details as representations or suggestions of natural objects. This the spectator can do after a time, and where one can do it, many can.

Given a work of art, painting, sculpture, music—anything—its appreciation and understanding depend upon the *attitude* of the audience.

A work of art may be, and ultimately must be viewed from two very different points of view—the point of view of the *artist,* and the point of view of the *observer.*

The great majority of people view a painting only from the latter point of view, only in the light of *their preconceived* notions and prejudices—hence the ridicule of the strange and the protest against the new.

A very, very small minority—a minority so small it numbers scarce one in ten thousand—view a new work searchingly and at the same time sympathetically *from the artist's point of view,* seeking diligently to find out what he is trying to do, and not permitting a single prejudice or preconceived notion of their own to bias their judgment.

After this class of observers have ascertained what the artist intended, *then,* and not until then, do they turn and view the work from their own point of view—that is, in the light of their own likes and dislikes.

Their final appreciation may be that *granting the theories of the artist* the picture is a fine one, but they do not agree with the artist's theories, hence the picture from their point of view is a failure as a work of art.

To rightly view a work of art is an *act of creation;* the true observer is a painter; the true reader is a poet.

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It is not at all strange that the great majority referred to should resent Kandinsky's improvisations, for they are not easy to understand, though most of them are undeniably fascinating in color.

It is not even strange that a large percentage of the intelligent and sympathetic minority should finally reach the

conclusion that the theories of the artist are not sound, and therefore all his work based on his extreme theories fails as art work, but the attitude of this fraction of the minority is an attitude of intelligent and conscientious conviction, reached after long and impartial investigation, while the attitude of the great majority is that of impulsive ignorance and irritation, reached on first impression and without the slightest attempt at understanding.

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To illustrate: The great majority of people on first hearing Chinese music exclaim, "What a horrid din!" and turn away.

A very, very small minority, about one man in a million, say, "True, it sounds to us like a din, but to a people of extraordinary civilization it is music; the matter is worth investigating," and on investigation it would be found that Chinese music from time immemorial has been under state supervision.*

The very ancient scale was pentatonic—five tones. It was in the seventh century, B. C., that the Asiatic flute was introduced into Greece and the Greek Doric scale transformed into one of five tones.†

Among the more cultivated nations, the Chinese, and Celts of Scotland and Ireland still retain the scale of five notes without semitones, although both have become acquainted with the complete scale of seven tones.

The division of the octave into twelve semitones, and the transposition of scales have also been discovered by this intelligent and skilful nation.

But, generally speaking, both the Gaels and the Chinese, notwithstanding their acquaintance with the modern tonal system, hold fast by the old. And it cannot be denied that by avoiding the semitones

* "The History of Music," Emil Nauman, Vol. 1, p. 7 *et seq.*
† See "Sensations of Tone," Helmholtz, Eng., Edit., p. 258.

GAUGUIN
Portrait of Self

GAUGUIN
Farmyard

of the diatonic scale, Scotch airs receive a peculiarly bright and mobile character, although we cannot say as much for the Chinese.*

While we are content with a scale divided into semitones, the more delicate oriental ear requires *quarter* tones. The Arab octave is divided into *twenty-four* intervals. A distinguished musician on a visit to Cairo wrote Helmholtz as follows: "This evening I have listened attentively to the song on the minarets, to try to appreciate the *quarter-tones* which I had not supposed to exist, as I had thought the Arabs sang *out of tune*. But today as I was with the dervishes I became certain that such quarter-tones existed.†

In discussing the development of our modern, *equal* temperament (adopted commercially in England for pianos not until 1846), Helmholtz says, "Amiot reports equal temperament from China long previously even to Pythagoras." ‡

The Chinese are the only people who, thousands of years ago, possessed a system of octaves, a circle of fifths, and a normal tone. With this knowledge, however, their eighty-four scales, *each of which has a special philosophical signification,* appear all the more incomprehensible to us.§

"The Chinese believe their music to be the first in the world. *European music* they consider to be *barbaric* and *horrible.*" ||

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All this goes to show how hazardous it is to jump to the conclusion that what we don't understand has no meaning.

To one ignorant of Chinese or Japanese or Hebrew handwriting it seems just as absurd and meaningless as a drawing by Picasso or a painting by Kandinsky, but to the earnest

* Helmholtz, p. 258.
† Ibid., p. 265.
‡ For a scientific investigation of Siamese and Japanese scales, see additions to English edition of Helmholtz, "Sensation of Tone," p. 556.
§ "History of Music," Nauman, Vol. I, p. 10.
|| Ibid., Vol. I, p. 12.

and indefatigable searcher after hidden meanings the strange handwriting and the strange pictures both deliver up a message.

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Of such paintings as Kandinsky's improvisations it is often flippantly said, "They paint that way because they can't draw."

As a matter of fact most of the extreme moderns such as Picasso, Matisse, Kandinsky, are past-masters of the art of drawing.

But they do not now attach the importance to drawing, merely for the sake of drawing, they once did.

Kandinsky's own attitude is expressed in the following extract from a letter:

As regards other artists, I am very tolerant, but at the same time most severe; my opinion of artists is influenced but little by considerations of the element of form, pure and simple; I expect of the artist to bear within at least the "sacred spark" (if not "flame"). There really is nothing easier than to master the form of something or someone. Boecklin is quoted as having said that even a poodle-dog might learn how to draw, and in this he was correct. At the schools I attended I had more than a hundred colleagues who had learned something, many had in good time managed to draw quite well and anatomically correct — *still,* they were not artists, not a pfennig's worth. In short, I value *only* those artists who really are artists; that is, who consciously or unconsciously, in an *entirely original form,* or in a style bearing their *personal imprint,* embody the expression of their *inner self;* who, consciously or unconsciously, work *only* for *this end* and cannot work *otherwise.* The number of such artists is very few. If I were a collector I would buy the works of such even if there were weaknesses in what they did; *such* weaknesses grow less in time and finally disappear entirely, and though they may be apparent in the earlier works of the artist still they do not deprive even these earlier and less perfect works of value. But the *other* weakness, that of *lack of soul,* never decreases with time, but is sure to grow worse and become more and more apparent, and so render absolutely valueless works that *technically* may be very correct. The entire history of art is proof of this. The *union* of *both* kinds of strength — that of intellect or spirituality with that of

form, or technical perfection — is most rare, as is also demonstrated by the history of art.

From his exceedingly abstruse article "On the Question of Form" in "Der Blaue Reiter," I take and paraphrase the following:

At certain times our inner forces — impulses — mature and the result is a longing to create something, and we try to find a material form — manifestation — for the *new value* that exists in us in spiritual or intellectual form.

This is the seeking of the *spiritual* for material expression. Matter is but the store house out of which the spirit selects the necessary elements to secure the objective result.

Thus the *creative spirit* is hidden in the matter, behind the material manifestation through which it must make itself known. But often the material envelope is so dense that only a few people can discern the spiritual idea within and behind it; some people never penetrate behind the matter at all, and therefore, never comprehend the spiritual message.

While many comprehend the *spiritual* content behind the *outward* forms of religion, they do not realize that there is, or should be, a *spiritual* content behind the *outward* forms of art.

There are whole epochs when men seem blind to the spiritual truths that are behind material manifestations; generally speaking, the nineteenth century was a century of *materialism.*

It is as if a *black hand* were placed over the eyes of men so they should not see the spiritual forces behind the material, and the production of new spiritual values is fought by mockery and calumny. The man who produces the new value is held up to ridicule and called a charlatan.

The *joy of living* is the *perpetual victory* of the new, the *spiritual value*. But even as men learn to appreciate the new of yesterday and today they establish it as a barrier against the new of tomorrow. Spiritual development and evolution are a constant throwing down of these bars that are as constantly re-erected by the materialism and blindness of mankind.

Therefore the important thing is not only the impulse to create new spiritual values, but *liberty* to do so.

The spiritual is the *absolute*, the outward form is *relative*, it is born of the place and the hour. Therefore one should not fall into the worship of a particular form, but should use whatever form best serves to express the spiritual content.

And, naturally, each artist must use *his own form* to express his own ideas, and *form* should have the stamp of *personality*.

Each nation, each epoch will develop its own forms, or peculiarities of forms, and it is the reflection of the nation, the epoch, the individual in the particular form that is known as, or makes the *style*.

When a group of artists is animated by the same spirit the forms they use will be so alike the result will be a "movement" or "school" in art; but a "school" should not be permitted to dominate the freedom of others. Every individual must be at liberty to choose the form that best expresses the spiritual message he wishes to utter.

The form—picture—may be agreeable or disagreeable, beautiful or ugly, harmonious or disharmonious, but it must not be judged on its outward appearance; it must be judged by the *idea*, the *spiritual value* behind it. We must look *through* the form to the spiritual, as we would look through the deformed body of the cripple to the soul of the man.

In practical life we never meet a man who, if he wishes

GAUGUIN
Scene in Tahiti

GRIS
Still Life

to go to Berlin, gets off the train at Regensberg. But in spiritual life it is a common thing to find people who step out at Regensberg. Sometimes the engine driver refuses to go on and all the travelers have to leave the train at Regensberg. How many who are *looking for God* stop before a *carved image!* How many who are looking for art are caught by some form that has been used by some great artist to express *his* ideas!

And in conclusion he asserts, it is not of vital importance whether the *form* is personal, national, according to prevailing mode, or whether it is related to "schools," "movements," etc., etc., or is isolated. *"The important question is whether the form has grown out of the inner, spiritual necessity."*

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In art, especially in painting, we have today striking richness of form which shows the immense striving that is going on.

To adhere stubbornly to one form is to travel a lane that has no outlet.

Many call the present state of painting "anarchy," and so they say of music, but this appearance of anarchy, of lawlessness, is due to the workings of spiritual forces that cannot be expressed in old forms, but demand new manifestations.

It is one thing to reproduce on canvas an accurate representation of an object, but such a representation is no more than the outer shell; to find out whether the picture has any real, any spiritual value one must get rid of this outer shell. Step by step the "objective," the photographic elements are eliminated until in the end there may be no trace of any object, and with this elimination the spiritual content becomes plainer and plainer. The steps are:

Realism — abstraction —

Abstraction — *reality.*

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Objects need not necessarily be eliminated from a picture, but they should be used *not* for the sake of forcing their photographic likenesses upon the observer, but solely to more perfectly express the inner, the spiritual significance of the work.

If a painter introduces a suggestion of a landscape or a bit of still life it should be for the purpose of making *his* meaning, *his* inner feeling plainer to the beholder, and not for the purpose of making a colored photograph of a field or flowers.

Therefore it does not matter whether *actual* or *abstract* forms are used by the artist, so long as both are used to express *spiritual values.* The sole question regarding form the artist should put to himself is, "Which form, or combination of forms, shall I use in this case to express most fully and plainly my spiritual mood?"

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The *ideal art critic* is not the critic who tries to discover mistakes, ignorance, imitations in the form, but he who tries to *feel* and *understand* how the form *expresses* the *inner feeling* of the artist and who tries to make the public understand.

A painter may use new and strange forms for the sake of the forms, just for the sake of painting new and strange pictures, but the result will be lifeless.

It is only when new and strange forms are used *because* they are necessary to express a spiritual content that the result is a *living* work of art.

"The world reverberates; it is a cosmos of spiritually working human beings. Thus matter is living spirit."

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Rather a fine philosophy, is it not?

One cannot but feel that out of such thoughts good works must come.

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To quote once more from a personal letter:

"I have now been exhibiting for almost fifteen years, and for the same fifteen years I have been hearing (although more rarely of late) that I have gone too far on my way; that in time my exaggerations will most surely decrease, and that I would yet paint in an 'entirely different manner'; that I would 'return to nature.' I had to hear this for the first time when I exhibited my studies painted on the naturalist basis with the horn (spatula).

"The truth of the matter is that every really gifted artist, that is, an artist working under an impulse *from within,* must go in a way that in some mystical manner has been laid out for him from the very start. His life is nothing but the fulfillment of a task set for him *(for him, not by himself).* Meeting with enmity from the start, he feels only vaguely and indistinctly that he carries a message for the expression of which he must find a *certain* manner. This is the period of 'storm and stress,' then follow desperate *searching,* pain, great pain — until *finally* his eyes open and he says to himself, 'There is my way.' The rest of his life lies along this path. And one must follow it to the very last hour *whether one wants to do so, or not.* And no one must imagine that this is a Sunday afternoon's walk, for which one selects the route at will. Neither is there any Sunday about it; it is a working day, in the strongest sense possible. And the greater the artist, the more one-sided is he in *his* work; true, he retains the ability to do 'nice' work of other kind (by reason of his 'talent'), but *innerly* weighty, infinitely deep, and immeasurable serious things he can achieve *only* in his *one-sided* art. Talent is not an electric pocket lantern, the rays of which one

may at will direct now hither and then thither; it is a star for which the path is being prescribed by the dear Lord.

"As far as I am concerned personally, I was as if thunderstruck, when for the first time and in only a general manner I began to see my way. I was awed. I deemed this inspiration to be a delusion, a 'temptation.'

"You will easily understand what doubts I had to overcome, until I became convinced that I had to follow this way. Of course, I clearly understood what it means 'to drop the objective.' With what doubts I was troubled regarding my own powers! For I knew at once *what* powers were *absolutely* required for this task. How this inner development proceeded, how *everything* pushed me on to this way and how the exterior development slowly but logically (step by step) followed suit, you will see from my book that is to appear shortly (in English). All that I still see *ahead* of me, all these tasks, the ever-increasing wealth of possibilities, the ever-growing depth of painting I cannot describe. And one must and *may* not describe such things: they must mature *innerly* in secret confinement and may not be expressed otherwise than by the painter's art.

"If in time you acquire the ability to more exactly *live* my pictures, you will have to admit that the element of 'chance' is very rarely met with in these pictures, and that it is more than amply covered by the large positive sides—so amply, indeed, that it is not worth while to mention those weak spots.

"My constructive forms, although outwardly appearing indistinct, are in fact rigidly fixed as if they were cut in stone.

"These explanations lead us too far; they could help only if illustrated by examples. Also, this letter is already much longer than it ought to be. I trust that I have expressed myself clearly! These things are so infinitely complicated,

and how often do I deviate from my theme and thus (instead of producing 'clarity') cause confusion to become worse confounded!"

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The result are paintings such as the four reproduced in color and half-tone.

The brilliant color combinations and harmonies of the originals are inadequately disclosed in the reproductions, the scale is too reduced. But the forms are well indicated, strange, curious forms, meaningless on first impression but *insistent.*

Most people are repelled at once by the landscapes because they seem so badly drawn a child could do better; but even as landscapes, as impressions of nature — or rather of *something in nature* — the pictures will not be denied.

If they were intended to be accurate representations of natural scenes, mountains, fields, trees, houses, they would be ridiculous indeed, but they are not so intended, therefore they should not be so judged.

In looking at these pictures — compositions, rather, it is but fair to look at them from the point of view of the painter, try to *read* them as he *wrote* them.

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"*Compositional*" painting is no radical departure, no new discovery.

The instinct of the child is to "compose," to create. It is only after much chiding and correction that the child draws literally — copies what it *sees.*

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It takes a big and strong man to pass through schools and academies and come out unscathed. The art school is a godsend to talent and mediocrity; it is a menace to genius.

Most paintings are "compositional" to *some* extent. But

from the literalness of Monet's hay stacks to the abstract qualities of Kandinsky's improvisations the interval is great.

There is, too, a difference in kind, as well as degree, between the compositions of the painter who simply rearranges nature, persons, or objects to secure a pleasing or effective result, and the painter who uses nature, life, or objects as so many signs or notes to express his inner feelings; the former paints to *impress* others, the latter paints to *express himself* to others. The one is thinking all the time of his picture, the other is thinking all the time of his message.

All great painters have combined the two attitudes, they have *expressed themselves* in pictures that not only convey the message but *as pictures* impress others—that is characteristic of the world's great art.

At the moment the pendulum is swinging toward the extreme where everything is subordinated to the expression of the artist's *self*, and the indications are that some subtle and wonderful things will be painted before the pendulum swings back.

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To what extent the public generally will accept pure compositional painting it is impossible to say; but the number of those who enjoy it will steadily increase until there will be many lovers of art who will collect only the most abstract works.

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A Russian painter of great strength but entirely different inspiration and technic was asked, "Do you like Kandinsky's Improvisations?"

"Very much."

"Do you understand them?"

"No."

"Then why do you like them?"

"Because they give me pleasure and I am sure that as

I look at them they excite in me the same pleasure they excited in him when he painted them; he has succeeded in conveying to me his own emotions and that is the most any artist can hope to do."

Which brings us back to the proposition laid down in an earlier chapter: the emotional reaction to music and painting may be and usually is quite independent of the intellectual, and while it may be either increased or diminished in *volume* by *understanding,* it is necessarily *changed* in character.

Another artist, an Austrian, was asked:

"How do you like Kandinsky's Improvisations?"

After a moment's hesitation he replied slowly: "They interest me immensely, and I admire the man's courage to express himself in his own way regardless whether people understand him or not, but he goes so far that it is almost impossible for even his friends and sympathizers to understand his pictures. He goes so far he is quite alone, no one can follow, and therein I think perhaps he makes a mistake, for after all pictures should be so painted that those who earnestly try can understand them."

But that is just the question that every great artist is obliged to put to himself, "Shall I write or paint so that others will understand, or shall I express myself in my own way even though no one but myself comprehends and even I fail at times?"

It is just as bad to paint with the sole purpose of being understood — *commercialism* — as it is to paint with the sole purpose of being misunderstood — *charlatanism.*

VIII

COLOR MUSIC

COLOR MUSIC is no new idea, but of late it is finding new expression.

While painters are beginning to paint color harmonies that are independent of the representations of natural objects, others are seeking the same emotional effects with colored lights.

A "color organ" has been invented* which deals with color for its own sake as music does with sound, thereby opening up a new world of beauty and interest as yet to a great extent unexplored.

When you enter Mr. Rimington's English studio you see at one end of it a curious instrument with a keyboard and stops, while at the other end is a white screen, hung in folds to give greater depth and life to the colors playing upon it. What happens when the instrument is played is thus described by Mr. Rimington:

"Imagine a darkened concert room. At one end there is a large screen of white drapery in folds, surrounded with black and framed by two bands of pure white light. Upon this we will suppose, as an example of a simple color composition, that there appears the faintest possible flush of rose color, which very gradually fades away while we are enjoying its purity and subtlety of tint, and we return to darkness. Then, with an interval, it is repeated in three successive phases, the last of which is stronger and more prolonged.

"While it is still lingering upon the screen, a rapid series of touches of pale lavender notes of color begin to flit across it, gradually strengthening into deep violet. This again becomes shot with amethyst, and afterward changing gradually into a broken tint of ruby, gives a return to the warmer tones of the opening passage.

"A delicate primrose now appears, and with little runs and flushes of pulsation leads through several passages of indescribable cinna-

* By Mr. A. W. Rimington, Professor of Fine Arts at Queen's College, London. See his book, "Color Music."

PICASSO
Old Woman

GIRIEUD
Woman Seated

mon color to deep topaz. Then suddenly interweavings of strange green and peacock blue, with now and then a touch of pure white, make us seem to feel the tremulousness of the Mediterranean on a breezy day, and as the color deepens there are harmonies of violet and blue green which recall its waves under a Tramontana sky. More and more powerful they grow, and the eye revels in the depth and magnificence of the color as the executant strikes chord after chord among the bass notes of the instrument.

"Then suddenly the screen is again dark and there is only a rhythmic and echoing beat of the dying color upon it. At last this disappears also, and there is another silent pause, then one hesitating tint of faded rose as at the opening of the composition.

"Upon this follows a stronger return of the color, and as the screen once more begins to glow with note after note of red and scarlet, we are prepared for the rapid crescendo which finally leads up to a series of staccato and forte chords of pure crimson which almost startle us with the force of their color before they die away into blackness!

"This," says Mr. Rimington, "is an extremely simple example, but it may suffice to show the kind of effect produced by an unadorned form of mobile color not accompanied by music. In some cases a musical accompaniment was found to add greatly to the interest of a color composition. The nearest approach to color music in nature is to be found in certain sunsets." Of the emotional and aesthetic effect of color music on various beholders we read:

The amount of pleasure and interest derived from color compositions varies immensely with individuals. An interesting instance of this was the case of a well-known London doctor, who told the author, after first seeing a recital of color-music, that he was absolutely unappreciative of any form of "sound music;" that it was, in fact, a pain to him, and that he had always detested it. "But," he said, "from the moment that I first saw a display of mobile color, I realized what I had missed all my life through my inability to appreciate music. It opened up a new world of sensations to me and gave me the greatest mental pleasure I have ever experienced." This clearly shows that to some persons mobile color would, or does, fill the place which music can not occupy in their lives.

On the other hand, there can be little doubt that to some, though they would hardly own it, color of any kind is more or less unpleasant, and they would prefer to live in a monotonic world. One must therefore be prepared for a great variety of opinions with regard to any such art as that of mobile color. The majority of people will probably derive a moderate but increasing pleasure from it.

There are many to whom it at once provides a surpassingly interesting source of enjoyment and education, and some to whom, like my medical friend, it will open up an entirely new world of sensations; and there are others, again, to whom it will be supremely distasteful. It is well to recognize this to avoid disappointment, and be prepared for very divergent expressions of opinion about it.

Speaking broadly, it appeals most to those who have had an artistic training into which color has entered, and it is less attractive to those whose interests center in music. This is not what the author personally expected. He imagined that the connection with music being so close on some points, those who would take the greatest interest in mobile color would be musicians; but, with some striking exceptions among distinguished musicians, the musical world, as far as it has yet come into contact with color-music, has been at first inclined to see points of divergence rather than those of analogy and to look upon the art as a possible rival. A similar attitude is often adopted toward any new departure in science or art, and there is no reason for resenting it; it merely makes the cooperation of those among musicians who are able to take a sympathetic view and welcome the endeavor to open up new fields of investigation all the more valuable.

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From time immemorial child and man have taken the keenest delight in fireworks and colored lights which are after all a species of light music.

Since the adoption of electricity for lighting it is comparatively easy to produce the most wonderful effects both indoors and out.

As yet little thought has been given to producing harmonious light effects on streets—save in advertising signs. For the most part the lighting is garish in the extreme, often positively painful to the eyes, but in time this will be corrected. Public authorities cooperating with private owners will work out schemes for lighting streets and shops that will yield charming effects.

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Already much has been done in the theater, especially

in Russia and Germany. The value of light effects is being recognized. Soft music is often played to enhance the effect of a tender or pathetic scene, and it is quite common for the lights to change in harmony.

By the use of light alone as an accompaniment to a love scene the same effect on the audience can be secured as by the use of soft music.

So far all this has been done crudely and for the most part unscientifically. Producer and electrician have worked together in a haphazard way, often with great success, sometimes with most disagreeable results.

The very term "stage lighting" is not inspiring, but the art of light music will be developed and be taught in theory and practice. Masters of the art will come and men will realize that it is just as great an art to satisfy the eye with light melodies as it is to please the ear with sound melodies.

There yet may be entertainments where only light music is played as there are concerts where only sound music is played.

And why not? Just ask yourself the question — Why not?

Of all the organs of sense the eye is the most delicate and the most wonderful. The ear responds to *air* waves that travel at the rate of 1,100 *feet* per second and vary in frequency from 16 to 32,000 per second. The musical notes vary from 32 to 5,000 beats per second.

The eye responds to *ether* waves that travel at the rate of 182,000 *miles* per second and vary in frequency from 400 millions millions — the lowest red of the spectrum — to 750 millions millions (red 400,000,000,000,000; violet 750,000,000,000,000) the highest violet.

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Man has devoted ages to developing harmonies in the

combination of air waves, and he has reduced sound music to a science.

He has devoted *all* the ages of his being to the use of color in one way and another to please his eye, but only of late has he made any attempt to understand the *science* of light and color music.

◆ ◆ ◆

The *material* civilization we *have* attained in comparison with the *spiritual* civilization we *should* attain is fairly well indicated by the vast difference between the crude and natural art of *sound* effects which is, so far, man's most abstract achievement in art, and the incomparably finer and more ethereal art of light and color effects which will be one of the crowning achievements of man's nobler future.

◆ ◆ ◆

The painter of *easel* pictures arrogates to himself the name artist and to his work the phrase *fine art*. He looks down upon the house painter, the dressmaker, and the interior decorator.

Yet as compared with those who clothe our bodies and decorate our homes in harmonies of line and color the painter of easel pictures cuts very little figure in life; he plays his part but much of his inspiration is drawn from the work of the other two.

It should never be forgotten that in all the great portraits of the world the clothes and the interiors that furnish the beautiful color schemes *preceded* the pictures often by generations.

The costumer and the decorator work year in and year out, from generation to generation, throughout the centuries, with not so much as a thought of the painter in the corner with his little canvas, faithfully copying.

Now and then a great painter, a great sculptor, takes off his coat, turns workman for the moment and makes sculptures for buildings, paints pictures on walls, devises costumes, and contributes to making our environment more beautiful.

But not infrequently the sculptor and the painter upset the equilibrium of the work of others by doing things which are out of key or out of proportion. The "fine artist" *may* bring the work of decorating to a standstill by painting spotty *easel* pictures on walls that should be treated in harmony with the entire building and with its uses.

◈ ◈ ◈

The time will come when art schools will teach pure color composition as well as drawing and the painting of pictures.

Why should not prizes be offered for color harmonies?

As it is now pupils are taught everything *except* the use of color *for the sake of color.*

◈ ◈ ◈

What is a "still life"? Simply a painting of a number of objects selected and arranged primarily for their color notes. Why not paint the notes without the fruit and dishes?

So far as the color harmony is concerned the *figure* of an orange, an apple, a banana is not essential; in reality the photographic realization distracts. But the public is not accustomed to *pure* color music, it is not accustomed to seeing canvases that contain only color harmonies with no suggestion of object or form, it demands that the note of yellow shall be a lemon or a banana, that the note of purple shall assume the shape of a plum and so on, and so on; yet all the time the enjoyment derived from a fine "still life" is

from the harmony that results from the combination of colors, and in no sense from the objects arbitrarily and artificially grouped together.

◆ ◆ ◆

The use of line and color *imitatively* to depict objects is one thing.

The use of line and color *freely* to produce pure line harmonies and pure color harmonies, with no reference to objects is quite another, and in a sense, a far higher art — a more abstract art.

It is toward the development of this more abstract art that the modern experiments are tending. The net result in the long run will be the education of a considerable fraction of the public to the appreciation of pure line and color music and a consequent demand for paintings that are simply pure line and color compositions.

With this development of a taste for a very abstract art all the arts and crafts are certain to be beneficially affected.

The study of line for the sake of line, and of color for the sake of color if systematically pursued will make all draftsmen greater masters of line, and all painters — to the humblest house painter — greater masters of color.

IX

ESORAGOTO

NEITHER the Cubists nor Kandinsky troubled a very distinguished Japanese expert who spent many days at the exhibition.

"The principles of all this are old, very old, in Japan."

He was far more interested in the extreme drawings and paintings than in the more academic. Pointing to a drawing that seemed scarce more than a few careless strokes, he said, "That is quite in the spirit of the best Japanese art."

A year later when he saw the work of Kandinsky and Bloch he was most enthusiastic, especially over the more abstract paintings.

◈ ◈ ◈

To either copy or be in the slightest degree hampered by nature is a mark of inferiority in Chinese and Japanese art.

The very abstract art of the Orient has its elaborate conventions, but those conventions are all in the direction of *pure* art, whereas the conventions of our art (music always excepted) are all in the direction of imitation.

It was a theory of the great Chinese teacher, Chinanpin, and particularly enforced by him, that trees, plants, and grasses take the form of a circle, called in art *Rin kan;* or a semi-circle, *Han kan;* or an aggregation of half circles, called fish-scales, *Gyo sin;* or a modification of these latter, called moving fish-scales, *Go sin Katsu.**

◈ ◈ ◈

In regard to painting moving waters, whether deep or shallow, in rivers or brooks, bays or oceans, Chinanpin declared it was impossible for the eye to seize their exact forms because they are ever changing and have no fixed, definite shape; therefore, they cannot

* "On the Laws of Japanese Painting," by Bowie, p. 55.

be sketched satisfactorily; yet, as moving water must be represented in painting, it should be long and minutely contemplated by the artist and its general character — whether leaping in the brook, flowing in the river, roaring in the cataract, surging in the ocean or lapping the shore — observed and reflected upon, and after the eye and the memory are both sufficiently trained and *the very soul of the artist is saturated,* as it were, with this one subject, and he feels his whole being calm and composed, he should retire to the privacy of his studio and with the early morning sun to gladden his spirit there attempt to reproduce the movement of the flow; *not by copying what he has seen,* for the effect would be stiff and wooden, but by symbolizing according to certain laws *what he feels and remembers.*

◆ ◆ ◆

It begins to be plain why the Japanese expert was profoundly interested in the modern pictures and drawings.

◆ ◆ ◆

One of the most important principles in the art of Japanese painting — indeed a fundamental and entirely distinctive characteristic — is that called living movement, *sei do,* or *Kokoro machi,* it being, so to say, the transfusion into the work of *the felt nature* of the thing to be painted by the artist. Whatever the subject to be translated — whether river or tree, rock or mountain, bird or flower, fish or animal — the artist at the *moment of painting it must feel its very nature,* which, by the magic of his art, he transfers into his work to remain forever, affecting all who see it with the same sensations he experienced when executing it.

This is not an imaginary principle, but a strictly enforced law of Japanese painting. The student is insistently admonished to observe it. Should his subject be a tree he is urged when painting it to *feel* the *strength* which shoots through the branches and sustains the limbs; or if a flower to try to *feel* the grace with which it expands or bows its blossoms. Indeed, nothing is more constantly urged upon his attention than this great *underlying principle* that it is *impossible to express in art what one does not first feel.*

◆ ◆ ◆

"Waga kokoro waga te woyaku
Waga te waga kokoro ni ozuru."
Our spirit must make our hand its servitor;
Our hand must respond to each behest of our spirit.

The Japanese artist is taught that even to the placing of a dot in the eyeball of a tiger, he must *first feel* the savage, cruel, feline character of the beast, and only under such influence should he apply the brush. If he paint a storm he must at the moment *realise* passing over him the very tornado which tears up trees from their roots and houses from their foundations. Should he depict the seacoast with its cliffs and moving waters, at the moment of putting the wave-bound rocks into the picture he must *feel* that they are being placed there to resist the fiercest movement of the ocean, while to the waves in turn he must give an irresistible power to carry all before them. Thus, by this sentiment called living movement (*sei do*), *reality* is imparted to the inanimate object. This is one of the marvelous secrets of Japanese painting handed down from the great Chinese painters and based on psychological principles — *matter responsive to mind.**

◆ ◆ ◆

In the light of the foregoing, one begins to understand why Winslow Homer painted such wonderful realizations of the sea and rocky coasts — he *lived* removed from men, his most intimate friends the rocks and waves.

One also begins to understand how painters who show great strength and promise in their earlier works, based upon surroundings they know, lose both strength and promise when, flushed by prosperity or attracted by tinsel and glitter, they establish their studios in cities and still try to paint the sea or the country.

◈ ◈ ◈

Japanese artists are not bound down to the literal presentation of things seen. They have a canon, called *esoragoto,* which literally means an invented picture, or a picture into which certain fictions are painted.

Every painting to be effective must be *esoragoto;* that is there must enter therein certain artistic liberties. It should aim not so much to reproduce the exact thing as its sentiment, called *kokoro mochi,* which is the moving spirit of the scene; it must not be a facsimile.

◈ ◈ ◈

* "On the Basis of Japanese Painting," Bowie, pp. 77-79.

It is related that Okubo Shibutsu, famous for painting bamboo, was requested to execute a kakemono representing a bamboo forest. Consenting, he painted with all his well-known skill a picture in which the entire bamboo grove was in red. The patron upon its receipt marveled at the extraordinary skill with which the painting had been executed, and, repairing to the artist's residence, he said:

"Master, I have come to thank you for the picture; but, excuse me, you have painted the bamboo red."

"Well," cried the master, "in what color would you desire it?"

"In black, of course," replied the patron.

"And who," answered the artist, "ever saw a black-leaved bamboo?"

This story well illustrates *esoragoto*. The Japanese are so accustomed to associate true color with what the *sumi* [the black so commonly used in Japan] stands for, that not only is fiction in this respect permissible but actually missed when not employed.

◈ ◈ ◈

Esoragoto is a very good word for the Post-Impressionists to appropriate. We have no word in English and I know of none in French that is its equivalent.

Impressionism is painting with a minimum of *esoragoto;* Post-Impressionism is painting with a maximum of *esoragoto.*

The pendulum in art and literature swings from less *esoragoto* to more—from realistic transcription with a *minimum* of self, to idealistic compositions with a *maximum* of self.

◈ ◈ ◈

All the great art of the world is *esoragoto.*

The greatest paintings in the world are indoor not outdoor paintings—*in-self* not *out-self.*

All the great Italian paintings and frescoes are creations of the imagination. The portraits of Velasquez, Rembrandt, Hals are *esoragoto.* They are the sitters idealized by the genius of the artists. They are far removed from photographic realism.

Why are the portraits of the same man or woman painted by different artists so unlike? Because each is more or less

esoragoto — more or less the reflection of the painter rather than the sitter.

◆ ◆ ◆

For a long time we have been so influenced by the theories of the Impressionists, the realists, the *plein-air* school, that we resent it when an artist says, "I will paint something more beautiful than nature; I will paint nature herself more beautiful than she is. I will paint the spirit of nature. I will paint trees that do not look like trees, but will give you the feeling, the dignity, the power of trees. I will paint the earth, not as it looks, but in a way that will give you an impression of its fertility and fecundity. I will paint you flowers, not by faithfully copying them as they are in the field, but as they bloom and blossom in your memory. I will paint you men and women, not as you see them on the street and in the drawing room — superficial resemblances — but as they really are to you and to me, human beings the true significance of which is not expressed in the drooping of a moustache, the lifting of an eyebrow. I will paint them in black or brown or red or blue, or in gold or bronze, as does the sculptor; I will paint them in a way so strange you have never seen the like before, but I will make you *feel* their *humanity*."

◆ ◆ ◆

To illustrate the arbitrary manner which the great oriental artists use colors to produce harmonious results irrespective of nature, I once used a number of old Chinese paintings borrowed from a famous collection — in each of which the hair of the figures was painted *blue*.

And why not? Black, brown, or flaxen would not have given the effect the painter desired, any more than C, D, or E would take the place of F in a chord.

The Oriental needs a note of blue and so paints the hair

blue. And when one comes to think of it, next to some marvelous shades of red, blue hair is far more positive and picturesque than gray, or yellow, or any black but a glossy raven.

We never think of resenting a terra cotta horse in a print by Hokusai; it does not disturb us because we instinctively recognize the fact that a strong note of terra cotta is needed precisely where it is used—a terra cotta horse, or rock, or man, it matters not.

◆ ◆ ◆

Human faces of gold, silver, bronze, even marble—that ugliest of all stones, in its natural state—do not worry us.

In fact when we look at marble sculpture we are in the attitude of the man who ordered the painting of the bamboo forest. We are so accustomed to seeing ghastly white marble busts and statues we actually resent it if the sculptor *stains* or *colors* the marble not to make it more realistic, but to make it *more beautiful.*

Yet all Greek sculpture was painted or treated with wax in such a manner the harshness of the stone was modified. The sensitive vision of the Greeks could not tolerate the cold, hard whiteness.

Much of our enjoyment of ancient sculpture is due to its discoloration, to what time and the elements have done to its surfaces.

◆ ◆ ◆

Our appreciation of art will never be true until we can gaze with unprejudiced eye upon any combination of lines and colors the artist chooses to use.

So long as we demand that he shall use only those combinations we are accustomed to, just so long do *we* by *our* attitude check his development.

The average man is bewildered by the new and the

strange; he is bewildered by new cities, new countries, new peoples, new pictures, new sculpture, new architecture, new music, new books, new ideas — because he is not used to them and does not understand them; he does not know whether to like them or not so he condemns them in order to make a pretense of knowing.

◈ ◈ ◈

The rare man is not bewildered by the new and the strange at home or abroad, in art or life. He is interested and at once sets about learning and comprehending. He *loves* the new and the strange *instinctively* because they excite his curiosity and pique his intelligence. He loves to meet the new and the strange as an archeologist loves to find an inscription in an unknown tongue — for the hidden significance.

◈ ◈ ◈

This chapter may be concluded appropriately by four warnings which Chinese wisdom pours into the ears of art students. Many of the modern painters should ponder these precepts.

"Ja, Kan, Zoku, Rai."

"*Ja* refers to attempted originality in a painting without the ability to give it character, departing from all law to produce something not reducible to any law or principle.

"*Kan* is producing only superficial pleasing effect without any *power* in the brush stroke — a characterless painting, to charm only the ignorant.

"*Zoku* refers to the fault of painting from a mercenary motive only — thinking of money instead of art.

"*Rai* is the base imitation of or copying or cribbing from others."

X

UGLINESS

THE modern movement is in the direction of greater freedom, freedom to produce beautiful things in one's own way.

Unhappily many of the things produced are not beautiful now—not nearly so dignified and beautiful as thousands upon thousands of old pictures.

One's *first* impression on entering an exhibition of extreme modern works is not an impression of beauty but of *ugliness.*

There is no denying that, and it takes even the most impartial and sympathetic observer a long time to pick out the things which are fine in color and line and to readjust his notions of beauty.

Many of the pictures are brutal and most of them are crude, but while the first impression may be one of ugliness it is more, it is one of *exceeding vitality.*

There is nothing musty about the moderns, their canvases are so alive *they scream.*

As compared with the subdued tones of an academic exhibition a modern seems like a babel of discordant sounds, but the confusion is more apparent than real. By going day after day one gets accustomed to the newness, the freshness, the strangeness of it all and begins to understand and appreciate the one big, dominant note—*vitality.*

◆ ◆ ◆

Then, too, when we say the *first*—and last for most people—impression is one of ugliness, we must not forget

that our appreciations are primarily the result of environment and habit, and only secondarily, and with comparatively few, the result of intelligent discipline.

We like what we are accustomed to and dislike what we are not accustomed to. Few take the pains to discipline their likes and dislikes.

◈ ◈ ◈

Seventy years ago public and critics thought Turner ugly in the extreme.

Sixty years ago public and critics thought Millet ugly in the extreme.

Fifty years ago public and critics thought Manet ugly in the extreme.

Forty years ago public and critics thought Monet ugly in the extreme.

Thirty years ago public and critics thought Cézanne ugly in the extreme.

Twenty years ago public and critics thought Gauguin ugly in the extreme.

Ten years ago public and critics thought VanGogh ugly in the extreme.

Today public and critics think the Cubists and nearly all the new men ugly in the extreme.

Each decade has its men in art, music, science, literature whose works at first seem ugly, only to win out in the long run.

Hence the danger in pronouncing this or that painting ugly; it may seem grotesque and hideous today; thirty years hence it may command thousands from men and museums eager to possess it. That has been the history of many great paintings.

◈ ◈ ◈

Still we do have our notions regarding the ugly and the

beautiful, and while our notions change and develop year by year they naturally control at each given moment; that is, we cannot say we *think* a picture or a piece of music is beautiful today because the chances are we will think it beautiful a dozen years hence, any more than we can say we like olives on first tasting them, simply because most people come to like them after a time.

To the London public in 1840 the pictures of Turner were absurd.

To the Paris public in 1874 the pictures of the Impressionists were ridiculous.

To the New York public in 1913 the pictures of the Cubists were grotesque.

These several publics were not to blame; they could not help their impressions. They had been brought up on very different picture-food and did not like the taste of the new.

The attitude of the public was normal, logical, and sane. If the people had received the new men with wild acclamations of joy and called them great on first sight it would have meant such instability of opinion and character as to render the homage absolutely worthless.

In a sense, tenacity of opinion on the part of the public is the salvation of art as well as of morals; it is essential to substantial progress.

Therefore the everlasting conflict between the old and the new is a normal conflict; the clash between the public and new art, new music, new thought is a healthful clash, because the fiercer the conflict the more certain that what survives will be worth having.

◈ ◈ ◈

The only excuse for an ugly picture is superb technic—and even then the excuse is not a very good one for the same technic should paint a beautiful thing.

There were plenty of ugly pictures in the exhibition; some were interesting on account of their technic, others were without any excuse at all—*just ugly*.

A great painter may paint things, a great writer may write things which no amount of good painting and no amount of good writing can excuse—there are plenty of such paintings and books in the world.

But because there were a number of ugly—ugly to the extent of being objectionable—pictures in the exhibition, that should not and does not detract from the merits of men who did not paint them.

An ugly work is a comment upon him who produces it and upon those who accept it. It is a golden opportunity, a touchstone to those who reject it.

◈ ◈ ◈

There is a great deal of the ugly in the work of Matisse, mixed with a great deal of extraordinary technic. He is a good man to study, but a bad man to imitate—for that matter, the same, in a profounder sense, may be said of every man of ability.

Then, too, it should never be forgotten that *refinement* is an essential element in all *great* art.

◈ ◈ ◈

The supreme justification of the new art is that its works shall tend toward the beautiful. If they make for ugliness their existence is without rhyme or reason. Many of the new men seem to forget this.

However, even the ugly, the grotesque, the hideous has its use. Any art may become so smug, so complacent, so conceited that it requires the shock of the ugly to stir it to new life.

After Bouguereau, Matisse was inevitable.

However, a very little of the ugly goes a long way; very little of Matisse at his worst is all that is needed as antidote to Bouguereau.

Zola-like fidelity in depicting the ugly in life has its — and abuses.

◆ ◆ ◆

It is easy enough to paint a conglomeration of angles and cubes, but it will be as hollow and meaningless as the pattern of an oilcloth unless it has sincerity behind it.

No doubt many of the new men lack sincerity. Doubtless not a few are inspired with simply the desire to create sensation, but these men soon betray themselves.

The artist may not succeed in making *his* meaning clear, but the public — yes, even the much despised public — will instinctively *feel* whether there is *some* meaning, *some* intention worth finding out.

That was the secret of the success of the Cubist pictures. They attracted throngs because they were strange, but the throngs would never have gazed as they did unless behind the outward strangeness there had not been an inward earnestness of purpose.

"Those fellows are trying to do something," was an expression often heard.

◆ ◆ ◆

The papers would say, "They are simply making fun of the public," but the public, generally speaking, did not take that way.

A goodly section of the public made fun of the pictures, but very few people honestly felt the pictures made fun of the public — if anything they were rather too serious.

◆ ◆ ◆

To return to the proposition that a post-impressionist picture — being so largely *esoragoto* — must be well painted.

The painter of scenes and things is helped out by his subject.

The portrait of a beautiful woman may be very badly painted, but if it conveys the impression of a beautiful woman it is accepted.

The Cubist who tries to paint *his* impression of a beautiful woman has no likeness to help him out; he must make his painting so beautiful in itself that those who see it will, without knowing why, get some of the enjoyment from the mere composition of line and color that the artist received from knowing the woman who inspired the picture.

To do this a man must be a greater master of line and color, a greater technician, than the average portrait painter.

◈ ◈ ◈

Ask the average portrait painter to paint a composition of line and color, beautiful in itself without reference to any object, and not one in a hundred can do it.

The average portrait painter finds his compositions of line and color ready-made; he takes them as they come to him. He has little practice in *composing* for himself.

◈ ◈ ◈

However disconcerting the exhibition was to most painters it should have been stimulating to decorators and interior furnishers.

The older pictures are of little help to the decorator. On the contrary he rather dreads their presence on his walls. A room may be quite upset by a strong picture. To make the Leyland dining room harmonize with the "Princess from the Land of Porcelain" Whistler painted practically every inch of walls and ceilings, completely covering costly woodwork and old Spanish leather.

To rightly hold a Rembrandt a room must be subdued and

rich in tone, otherwise the picture is a dead weight. The greater the picture, the more completely the surroundings must either rise to it or be completely subordinated to it.

It is not so with the more abstract Cubist pictures; they do not thrust a great landscape or a powerful personality into the room; they are not intended to thrust any object upon the attention of the visitor. Intended to express simply the mood or emotion of the painter, they are unobtrusive, as unobtrusive as a pattern of the wall covering, a rug, or a tapestry; in effect they are not unlike a tapestry, save they are essentially modern in feeling, and therefore fit into our modern rooms as tapestries — and often rugs — do not.

◈ ◈ ◈

Imagine the editorial room of a live, up-to-date newspaper — say a typical yellow journal — hung with Titians and Rembrandts! The paper would be paralyzed, the editorial staff would be depressed by the dignity and the sobriety, by the old-world flavor.

Whereas a lot of Cubist, Futurist, Orphist pictures would be quite in keeping with modern journalistic methods, and stimulating in the extreme. In the picturesque language of current journalism, they would be "live stuff."

◈ ◈ ◈

It is worth noting in passing that the time is probably coming when about as many pictures will be bought for offices as for homes, and fewer and fewer will be bought for those graveyards of art — private galleries.

Why should men buy pictures and hang them where they are seldom seen, often in places where the light is so bad they cannot be seen?

Where do most men spend most of their time? In their places of business. Then why not make their places of business attractive and livable?

Every man knows how relaxing and delightful it would be if in the midst of a busy afternoon he could drop business for a moment and read an interesting book or listen to some good music. Well, we can't do that; it takes too long to get into a book, and music is not at hand.

But we can turn from our desks and in a second lose ourselves in the contemplation of a beautiful picture.

The physician covers the walls of his office with prints of such pictures as Rembrandt's "Lesson in Anatomy." Ugh!

The lawyer covers the walls of his office with dusty law-books. Whew!

The manufacturer covers the walls of his office with prints of factories, machinery, goods, etc., etc. Shop! Shop! Shop!

No relief anywhere for man, patient, client, or customer.

Tired eyes that seek rest in change are met with the same old story — reflections of the daily grind.

Speaking from experience, I can say that next to getting out of an office for a brief respite, the contemplation of pictures yields the greatest rest, actually enabling one to do more work per day with less fatigue.

It is so refreshing to get up from one's desk for only a few moments and be instantly transported far away on the wings of the imagination of a painter.

It is a rest, a complete rest, for the tired brain-cells, to lift one's eyes from one's work and gaze at a picture — the effect is like unto that of distant music wafted through the open window.

Of all men in the world, the busy American is most in need of pictures on the walls of his office — not one or two,

but many. The busier he is, the more he needs; his walls should be a blaze of color.

◆ ◆ ◆

Most of our bankers and corporation magnates spend large sums in "solid mahogany fittings." Their offices resemble old-fashioned Pullman sleepers. Cost is the one impressive feature. Woodwork, furniture, rugs, everything to the inkstand are massive and—oppressive. Everything is admirably calculated to make work more burdensome; commercial and financial life more sombre.

Why not the reverse of all this? Why fit up an office so that it is about as inviting as a tomb?

Why not make it so attractive that a man will look forward each morning to entering it? Why not so inviting that friends and strangers will be glad to visit it?

Why should an office be a place where no one goes except for business? Why should not men say to one another, "Come in a minute; I have a new picture I want to show you"?

◆ ◆ ◆

One has simply to enter the offices and school-rooms of any art institute to realize the hollowness of the pretense of love for the beautiful. Infinite pains are taken to arrange the pictures and sculpture in the galleries; once out of the galleries, and all feeling of art disappears; the offices and school-rooms are more sordid, barren, and uninviting than most shops and factories.

In other words, the very men who are supposed to be devoting their lives to the service of art, to making the world more beautiful, who promote exhibitions and urge people to buy pictures, are content to pass all their working lives amidst surroundings unrelieved by a single picture, unadorned by a single fresco.

There is a great opportunity for missionary work in this direction. Why should not the many organizations such as "Friends of American Art," etc., whose disinterested purpose is to advance art, organize a movement the object of which will be to place, by loaning if necessary, pictures and small sculpture in the offices and business haunts of the busy American man, and so create a new demand for beautiful things?

Once fill a man's office with pictures, he will be reluctant to let them go.

XI

FUTURISM

THERE were no Futurist pictures in the exhibition, but there were several more or less influenced by Futurism, notably the "Nude Descending a Staircase."

In many respects this was the least satisfactory of his pictures, because it is neither good Cubism nor good Futurism.

It is easy to distinguish a figure drawn in more or less Cubist fashion, at the right — the spectator's right — of the confused mass of lines; it is quite easy, if the balance of the picture be covered.

The confused mass is just so many overlapping figures coming down the stairs. As a child exclaimed one day, "Why, I see them; there's one on every step." The Cubist drawing did not bother the child.

A sympathetic writer says of the picture:

M. Duchamp says in effect something like this: "If you paint a girl coming downstairs, on any one step you will not show her moving. If you paint a girl on every step, like Burne-Jones with the 'Golden Stair,' you have a crowd and still no movement. But if you get the forms down to simplest and most essential, just swaying shoulders and hip and knee, bent head and springy sole — and then show them on every step and between all the steps, passing and always passing one into the next, you give the sense of movement, as with a run of arpeggios on the harp or a cadenza on the violin. You and your friends don't feel the movement — too bad, my friends and I do." And pure movement is what, after all, here was sought.

Pure movement, it will hardly be questioned, these men can give.

BALLA
Dog and Person in Movement

Picabia makes the lines in his "Dance at the Spring" leap and swing and flicker like a fiddler's bow. If he and others want, when they choose, to abandon the last pretense of representation and convey directly to you the way they feel mass and motion, as music conveys inner experience always, who is to stop them?

◈ ◈ ◈

Futurism had its beginning in Italy a few years ago. The first exhibition in Paris was held in February, 1912. One of its fundamental notions in painting is a certain theory regarding the painting of motion. It is that in order rightly, scientifically, to indicate motion on a canvas it is not sufficient to paint the figure of a man in an attitude of walking, but a series of more or less clearly outlined figures must be shown overlapping, a sort of cinematograph effect; very much as every painter shows a blur of spokes to indicate a wheel turning, if an individual is in motion there must be a blur of many overlapping individuals. (See the half-tone of the girl with the dog.)

The theory is interesting, it is based on recognized optical conditions, and no doubt the experiments will have their value. Some very interesting results have been obtained in photography already.

◈ ◈ ◈

The program of the Futurists is, however, far more ambitious than the mere painting of motion effects. They have issued the following formal "Manifestoes":

1. "Manifesto of Futurism," February, 1909; written by F. T. Marinetti.*

2. "Manifesto of Futurist Painters," April, 1910.

* Signor Marinetti is the founder of the school; he is not a painter, but a writer, editor of "Poesia." He is a young man and is followed by a small band of young enthusiastic writers, poets, musicians, painters, sculptors, whose innovations strike even the cubists as wild extravagances. In fact, Futurism and Cubism have very little in common except innovation; both are revolutionary but otherwise diametrically opposed in many of their aims and theories.

3. "Manifesto of Futurist Musicians," May, 1911.
4. "Manifesto of the Futurist Woman," March, 1912.
5. "Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture," April, 1912.
6. "Manifesto of the Technic of Futurist Literature," May, 1912. Supplement to same, August, 1912.

And every few months new declarations of faith are issued in Milan, each, if possible, more violent and extravagant than its forerunner.

If the public looked upon the Cubist pictures as "crazy," what would it think of these manifestoes if printed in English and scattered broadcast?

The work of madmen!

So many madmen and visionaries have influenced the world by their utterances that we must not turn a deaf ear.

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The Futurists are the anarchists of the art and literary world.

The Cubists, Orphists, and other extreme moderns all *reason from* the past; the Futurists would *break with* the past entirely—as if it were possible!

All who do not agree with them are *Past-ists,* and every form of art and literature up to Futurism belongs to *Past-ism,* and is therefore condemned.

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There is much in Futurism that is repellant, just as there is much in Anarchism that is repellant.

When men push their opposition to established order to extremes, their hatred of the traditional and conventional is such they indulge in wild and foolish excesses; they even defy law and order and decency, and require curbing.

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The unprejudiced reader will find a great deal that is

suggestive in some of these Futurist declarations mixed with much that is philosophically and ethically unsound.

Take, for instance, some of the propositions regarding the technic of the literature of the future:

1. Use only the *infinite form* of the verb, because only the infinite mood gives the sense of the *continuity of life.*

2. Abolish the use of the *adjective* so that the noun *standing alone* may speak for itself with all its force. The adjective implies modification, an arrest of judgment, meditation, and is, therefore, opposed to the *human vision dynamic,* to the *force* and *energetic flow* of human thought.

3. Abolish the *adverb,* which is a *superfluous refinement,* a fastidious hampering of human expression.

4. New *punctuation:* Adjectives and adverbs and conjunctive phrases being suppressed, punctuation goes with them naturally, in the varied continuity of a living style which creates itself without the use of absurd commas and periods. To accentuate certain movements and indicate their directions, certain mathematical and unusual signs will be used.

5. Abolish the "I" from literature, that is to say, *psychology;* replace the "I," the ego, by the *matter,* the essence of which must be appreciated by intuitions. Heretofore the matter, the real substance of a book or a poem, has been obscured by the intervention of the ego of the writer, by the persistent "I" of the author, who is too much preoccupied with himself and filled with prejudices and conceits in his own supreme wisdom. In short, writers use the subjects of the works as vehicles to exploit themselves.

(Here the Futurists certainly put their finger on one of the weak spots in literature.)

6. Revolution in *typographical* appearance: Suppress the ornaments, fancy initials, &c., &c., of the presented printed

page, which impede rather than assist the natural flow of expression. "We will employ on the same page three or four inks of different colors, and twenty different characters, if necessary: for example, italics to express rapid sensations; capitals for violent; &c., &c. New conception of the *graphic* printed page."

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All of which sounds wildly extravagant, but in sum and substance it simply means the death of the, let us say, Henry James style and the apotheosis of the front page of the modern sensational journal.

And is it not true that the painfully involved and difficult style of Henry James—the adjectival and adverbial style, the style of endless qualifications, the assertion and amplification of the "ego" style—is rapidly becoming obsolete in fiction as it has long been obsolete in American journalism?

And is it not true that the *terse*, the *substantive*, the *journalistic* style, together with the printed page in many colors and many types, is gaining vogue?

In even the matter of punctuation the painstaking use of the comma and the semicolon has yielded to the free use of the dash. Only a short time ago there appeared a lamentation by a well-known writer over the use of the dash in dialogue. He counted an unbelievable number on one page of a popular magazine, each of which, he thought, should have been replaced by one of the more orthodox signs.

But the orthodox signs are *too slow*. Modern conversation does not move in studied phrases and rounded periods; its sign is the *dash*, because the dash either breaks the thought abruptly or carries it over into the words of the next speaker.

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Furthermore, before leaving the subject, it should be

noted that there is coming over our literature a profound, a radical change, *a change in the direction of terser, more forcible expression;* a change in the *direction of the elimination of superfluous words,* of *condensation,* to the end that the imagination and intelligence of the *reader* will be called more and more into play.

It is conceivable that the reading public may become so *intelligent* and so keenly *sensitive* that *one word* will suffice to convey a wealth of information or suggestion where *a page* is now necessary.

Certain it is, if mankind is progressing at all, it is progressing in *that direction.*

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The *rise* of the *printed* drama means the *fall* of the *descriptive* novel.

A few years ago no American publisher would risk the printing of a play; now every play of any merit and many of no merit are issued in book form.

The novelist devotes two-thirds of his book to descriptions of persons and places, and most of the remaining third to banal psychological analysis and comment. He leaves little to the imagination of the reader, who is told the color of the heroine's eyes and hair, the number of her dimples, the length of her smile, the shape of her teeth, her make of face powder, together with endless references to her hats, gowns, shoes, parasols, etc., etc.

Usually the novelist has some young woman acquaintance in mind, and he *literally forces* the woman he likes upon the reader, who may be in love with an entirely different type, and who, if left to himself, would find the girl he likes in the pages of the story.

The dramatist does nothing of the kind. "Mary Smith,

age about twenty," suffices for him. Shakespeare gives no more than the name.

As for description of places, "a room," or "an office," "a wood," "a garden," answers every purpose.

Managers and players have no trouble in building up both scenes and characters; the less "directions," the more room for individual initiative.

Nor is the reader of a play troubled by entire absence of description and "directions." His imagination supplements the dramatist's, and he creates heroes and heroines to please himself.

That psychological *analysis* is not only not essential to the psychological novel, but positively detrimental, is demonstrated by the entire absence of such analysis in so profound a psychological study as Hamlet. Paul Bourget is as obsolete as Henry James.

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Bernard Shaw is the one conspicuous reactionary. He still exploits the ego, and writes as if his readers were fools—perhaps they are.

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The popularity of the cinematograph lies not in the cheapness of the entertainment, nor in its *novelty,* which wore off long ago, but in the fact that it is *without words* and each onlooker enjoys his own interpretation; from child to old man, every one in the audience is *his own playwright,* supplying his own dialogue as the scenes flicker on the curtain.

The best of modern plays leave much to the imagination of the audience. Words and bits of business absolutely necessary thirty years ago are considered childishly obvious nowadays, as is amply demonstrated in revivals of old plays.

Apparently the development is toward more action and less dialogue—more cinematograph, fewer words.

Scenery will become less and less obvious—save, of course, where it is intended to be of first importance. In the theater of the future there will be less and less on the stage to interfere with the *play—of the spectator's* imagination.

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There is a precisely parallel tendency in print—more action, fewer words; more suggestion, less description.

The future novel will leave more and more to be supplied by the reader. Paragraphs, pages, whole chapters now deemed essential, will be omitted.

In books such as histories, philosophical works, scientific treatises, &c., &c., the skill and art of the printer will be exhausted to make the page not only attractive but expressive—*readable at a glance,* instead of, as now, to make the volumes as forbidding as possible.

The much-despised "yellow journal" of America has taught a valuable lesson in the *art of emphasis,* and its effect is seen not only in the make-up of newspapers but of periodicals, and will be felt in the make-up of books.*

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In America the art of advertising has far outstripped the art of literature. The advertising pages of our periodicals are often more interesting and *always* more *alive* than the literary.

A magazine devotes pages to an article or a story every line of which betrays the writer's evident desire to write as

* Before seeing any of the Futurist literature and influenced only by developments in the printing of newspapers and periodicals in America, the writer caused a book on an economic subject to be printed in such a manner that, so far as possible, each page displayed on its face its contents. The attempt was made to so break up the pages and so use italics and capitals that the task of the reader would be lightened. The attempt attracted the very favorable attention of reviewers, several remarking that "the arts of the advertiser had been used to display the ideas"—and that was true.

many words as possible. In the advertising pages, to every square inch, the minds not of one but of three or four experts have been concentrated upon the attempt to express an idea in as *few words* as possible and in such a manner it will stand out and be read with a minimum of trouble.

Why should not stories be told that way? Why should not all literature be written and printed that way?

The proposition may seem a startling one, but the *tendency is* that way.

We find fault with our plays, our poetry, our fiction, our serious literature; we complain people prefer the *flashy* periodical; well the word *flashy* is doubly descriptive — it is commonly used to describe the *quality* but it also measures *time*.

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Meanwhile most of us underrate the intelligence of our readers and use more words than are necessary to carry our meanings.

The Futurists themselves use an abundance of words in advocating their cause, though their examples of Futurist literature contain many lines and pages that are written in strict accordance with their theories.

Marinette says in so many words, "Philosophy, science, politics, journalism, must still make use of the conventional syntax and punctuation; I am myself obliged to use them to explain my ideas."

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March 8, 1910, in the Theatre Chiarella, at Turin, before an audience of three thousand, the Futurist painters launched their first declaration of faith, "which contained," to follow their own words, "all our profound disgusts and hatreds, our revolts against vulgarity, against academic and pedantic mediocrity, against the fanatic cult of what is antique."

MUNTER
The Boat Ride

MUNTER
The White Wall

1. Our desire for the truth no longer contents itself with form and color as heretofore understood.

2. What we wish to reproduce on the canvas is not an instant or a moment of immobility of the universal force that surrounds us, but *the sensation of that force itself.*

3. As a matter of fact everything moves, everything runs, everything transforms rapidly. A profile is never immobile before us, but it appears and disappears without ceasing.

Given the fact of the momentary persistence of the image on the retina, objects in movement multiply, change form and follow like vibrations in space. A running horse has not four legs, but twenty, and their movements are triangular.

4. Nothing is absolute in painting. That which was a truth for the painters of yesterday, is a lie for those of today. We declare, for example, that a portrait should not resemble its sitter, and that the painter carries in his own imagination the landscape he wishes to place upon the canvas.

[On this point the Futurists and Cubists agree.]

5. To paint the human figure it is not necessary to paint the *figure* but simply to give its *envelopment.* Space does not exist. Millions of miles separate us from the sun, yet that is no reason why the house before us should not be encased in the solar disk. In our work we can secure effects similar to those of the X-ray. Opacity does not exist.

They paint all sides of an object as if they saw through it. They will paint a platter on a table and the part of the table covered by the platter; they will paint the entire collar about the neck so that it is visible through the neck. They ignore not only the ordinary conceptions of space, but time does not exist for them. Where in ordinary painting the box of bonbons that is passed at a baptism may be painted closed on a table, the Futurist shows what is inside the box, also the people assembled to whom the bonbons are given, and the infant to be baptized, and perhaps the marriage of the father and mother, the carriages outside the church, etc., etc.*

They illustrate further,

The sixteen persons about us in a moving omnibus are *in turn* and *at the same time,* one, ten, four, three; they are immobile and yet move; they go, come, bounding along the street, suddenly lost in the sun, then return seated before you, like *so many symbols persistent of universal vibration.*

* From an article by Ray Nyst, a Belgian critic in "La Belgique Artistique et Libraire."

How often it happens that upon the cheek of the person with whom we are talking we see the horse that passes far away at the end of the street. Our bodies become parts of the seat upon which we rest and the seat becomes part of us. The omnibus merges in the houses that it passes, and the houses mix with the bus and become part of it.

6. The construction of pictures up to this time has been stupidly traditional.

Painters have always shown things and persons *before* us. We place the spectator *in the midst* of the picture.

Heretofore we have looked *at* pictures; it is the idea of the Futurist that we should look *through* them, that the pictures should give us *new visions* of life and things, new sensations, new emotions.

We declare:

That one should hate every form of imitation and glorify every form of originality.

That it is necessary to revolt against the tyranny of the words "harmony" and "good taste," expressions too elastic and with which one might easily condemn the works of Rembrandt, Goya, and Rodin.

That art critics are useless and detrimental.

That it is necessary to brush aside all the subjects already used, in order to adequately express our turbulent life of steel, of pride, of feverish rapidity.

That the name madmen applied to all innovators shall be considered a title of honor.

That the universal force must be shown in painting as a *sensation dynamic.*

Above all, sincerity and purity are required in the portrayal of nature.

That movement and light destroy the materiality of objects.

We are opposed to the use of those bituminous colors by which it is attempted to secure the effect of time on modern pictures.

We are opposed to the superficial and elementary archaism based on the flat tints and linear manner of the Egyptians, which makes painting puerile and grotesque.

We are opposed to the false modernism of the Secessionists and Independents who have built up new "schools" as pontifical as the old.

The nude in painting is as nauseous as adultery in literature.

To explain this last article: There is nothing immoral in our eyes, it is the monotony of nudity that we fight against. Painters possessed of the desire to display on canvas the bodies of the women with whom they are in love have transformed picture exhibitions into

galleries of portraits of disreputables. We demand for the next ten years the absolute suppression of the nude in painting.

The first exhibition of Futurist paintings in London was at the Sackville Gallery in March, 1912.

The painters printed by way of preface to the little catalogue a statement of their beliefs and aims. From this statement the following paragraphs are taken:

"We are young and our art is violently revolutionary."

Speaking of the Cubists and Post-Impressionists generally:

"While we admire the heroism of these painters of great worth, who have displayed a laudable contempt for artistic commercialism and a powerful hatred of academism, we feel ourselves and we declare ourselves to be absolutely opposed to their art.

"They obstinately continue to paint objects motionless, frozen, and all the static aspects of nature; they worship the traditionalism of Poussin, of Ingres, of Corot, ageing and petrifying their art with an obstinate attachment to the past, which to our eyes remains totally incomprehensible.

"We, on the contrary, with points of view pertaining essentially to the future, seek for a style of motion, a thing which has never been attempted before us.

"All the truths learnt in the schools or in the studios are abolished for us. Our hands are free enough and pure enough to start everything afresh.

"It is indisputable that several of the aesthetic declarations of our French comrades display a sort of masked academism.

"Is it not, indeed, a return to the Academy to declare that the subject, in painting, is of perfectly insignificant value?

"We declare, on the contrary, that there can be no modern painting without the starting point of an absolutely modern sensation, and none can contradict us when we state that *painting* and *sensation* are two inseparable words.

"If our pictures are futurist, it is because they are the result of absolutely futurist conceptions, ethical, aesthetic, political, and social.

"To paint from the posing model is an absurdity, and an act of mental cowardice, even if the model be translated upon the picture in linear, spherical, or cubic forms.

"To lend an allegorical significance to an ordinary nude figure, deriving the meaning of the picture from the objects held by the model or from those which are arranged about him, is to our mind the evidence of a traditional and academic mentality.

"While we repudiate impressionism, we emphatically condemn the present reaction which, in order to kill impressionism, brings back painting to old academic forms.

"It is only possible to react against impressionism by surpassing it.

"Nothing is more absurd than to fight it by adopting the pictural laws which preceded it.

"The points of contact which the quest of style may have with the so-called *classic art* do not concern us.

"Others will seek, and will, no doubt, discover, these analogies which in any case cannot be looked upon as a return to methods, conceptions, and values transmitted by classical painting.

"A few examples will illustrate our theory.

"We see no difference between one of those nude figures commonly called *artistic* and an anatomical plate. There is, on the other hand, an enormous difference between one of these nude figures and our futurist conception of the human body.

"Perspective, such as it is understood by the majority of painters, has for us the very same value which it lends to an engineer's design.

"The simultaneousness of states of mind in the work of art: that is the intoxicating aim of our art.

"Let us explain again by examples. In painting a person on a balcony, seen from inside the room, we do not limit the scene to what the square frame of the window renders visible; but we try to render the sum total of visual sensations which the person on the balcony has experienced; the sun-bathed throng in the street, the double row of houses which stretch to right and left, the beflowered balconies, etc. This implies the simultaneousness of the ambient, and, therefore, the dislocation and dismemberment of objects, the scattering and fusion of details, freed from accepted logic, and independent from one another.

"In order to make the spectator live in the center of the picture, as we express it in our manifesto, the picture must be the synthesis of *what one remembers* and of *what one sees.*

"You must render the invisible which stirs and lives beyond intervening obstacles, what we have on the right, on the left, and behind us, and not merely the small square of life artificially compressed, as it were, by the wings of a stage."

[This feeling of transparency is fundamental to the theory.]

"We have declared in our manifesto that what must be rendered is the *dynamic sensation,* that is to say, the particular rhythm of each object, its inclination, its movement, or, to put it more exactly, its interior force.

"It is usual to consider the human being in its different aspects of motion or stillness, of joyous excitement or grave melancholy.

"What is overlooked is that all inanimate objects display, by their lines, calmness or frenzy, sadness or gaiety. These various tendencies lend to the lines of which they are formed a sense and character of weighty stability or of aerial lightness.

"Every object reveals by its lines how it would resolve itself were it to follow the tendencies of its forces.

"This decomposition is not governed by fixed laws but it varies according to the characteristic personality of the object and the emotions of the onlooker.

"Furthermore, every object influences its neighbour, not by reflections of light (the foundation of *impressionistic primitivism)*, but by a real competition of lines and by real conflicts of planes, following the emotional law which governs the picture (the foundation of *futurist primitivism)*.

"With the desire to intensify the aesthetic emotions by blending, so to speak, the painted canvas with the soul of the spectator, we have declared that the latter '*must* in future be placed in the center of the picture.'

"We may further explain our idea by a comparison drawn from the evolution of music.

"Not only have we radically abandoned the motive fully developed according to its determined and, therefore, artificial equilibrium, but we suddenly and purposely intersect each motive with one or more other motives of which we never give the full development but merely the initial, central, or final notes.

"As you see, there is with us not merely variety, but chaos and clashing of rhythms, totally opposed to one another, which we nevertheless assemble into a new harmony.

"We thus arrive at what we call the *painting of states of mind*.

"One may remark, also, in our pictures spots, lines, zones of colour which do not correspond to any reality, but which, in accordance with a law of our interior mathematics, musically prepare and enhance the emotion of the spectator.

"We thus create a sort of emotive ambience, seeking by intuition the sympathies and the links which exist between

RUSSOLO
Rebellion

the exterior (concrete) scene and the interior (abstract) emotion. Those lines, those spots, those zones of colour, apparently illogical and meaningless, are the mysterious keys to our pictures.

"Conclusion: Our futurist painting embodies three new conceptions of painting:

"1. That which solves the question of volumes in a picture, as opposed to the liquefaction of objects favoured by the vision of the impressionists.

"2. That which leads us to translate objects according to the *force lines* which distinguish them, and by which is obtained an absolutely new power of objective poetry.

"3. That (the natural consequence of the other two) which would give the emotional ambience of a picture, the synthesis of the various abstract rhythms of every object, from which there springs a fount of pictural lyricism hitherto unknown."

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The explanations of two pictures are as follows:

"Leave-taking," by Boccioni: "In the midst of the confusion of departure, the mingled concrete and abstract sensations are translated into force lines and rhythms in quasi-musical harmony: mark the undulating lines and the chords made up of the combinations of figures and objects. The prominent elements, such as the number of the engine, its profile shown in the upper part of the picture, its wind-cutting forepart in the center, symbolical of parting, indicate the features of the scene that remain indelibly impressed upon the mind."

"Rebellion," by Russolo: "The collision of two forces, that of the revolutionary element made up of enthusiasm and red lyricism against the force of inertia and reactionary resistance of tradition. The angles are the vibratory waves of the former force in motion. The perspective of the houses

is destroyed just as a boxer is bent double by receiving a blow in the wind."

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The theory of the Futurists is vividly illustrated in the following note to a picture called "The Street Enters the House." "The dominating sensation is that which one would experience on opening a window: all life, the noises of the street rush in at the same time as the movement and reality of the objects outside. The painter does not limit himself to what he sees in the square frame of the window as would a simple photographer, but he also reproduces what he would see by looking out on every side from the balcony."

To the layman this attitude is almost incomprehensible. For instance, the Cubist, Pierre Dumont, says of his picture, "The Cathedral at Rouen":

> One must not expect to find in this picture an exact representation of the cathedral at Rouen, but rather my idea, my personal perception, of this cathedral as I see it.
>
> In painting my picture I did not paint from a fixed point and always from the same point, but I studied the cathedral and surroundings from all points of view and obtained a personal conception of it, which I reproduced on my canvas.
>
> I only included the details which struck me most forcibly, and thought it necessary to break up the monotony of the roofs in the first plan by one of the most beautiful details of the cathedral—a statue of a saint, who is certainly not in his right place as far as the eye is concerned, but does really occupy the place which he occupies in my conception of what was before me.

◆ ◆ ◆

That a painter should deliberately attempt to show on one canvas features of all sides of a building, strikes the layman—and many artists—as a "crazy" attempt to achieve the impossible; but it is *not impossible,* as a moment's reflection shows.

It is, of course, easy to show all sides and all details of a building, interior and exterior, on one sheet or canvas, by

drawing or painting, one after another, in panorama effect—that is done in every architect's drawing-room.

It is also equally possible to *superimpose* these detached drawings one over the other and *see* or *feel* the outlines *through*. That is, the drawing or photograph of the exterior of a cathedral may be so made as to show in outline or shadowy substance the altar within.

Illustrations along these lines are common in fiction—ghostly, shadowy, mystical effects, effects secured only by treating stones and walls and human beings as *semi-transparent*.

In this way every feature of a cathedral that strikes the artist, whether on the outside or inside, whether a feature so permanent as a statue or so fleeting as a wedding ceremony, may be indicated in his picture. By suppressing every detail save the most striking, what purports to be the picture of a cathedral may appear to be fragments of spires, bronze doors, statues, altars, lights, processions, the brilliant color of a priest's robe, the white note of a bridal veil.

Another man painting his impressions of the same subject might catch glimpses of entirely different features.

If we can *in our mind's eye* see what is behind an object; if, for instance, we can picture to ourselves clearly the children playing in the yard back of a house, why may not the painter, if he chooses, suggest to us in his picture of the house the vital feature of the children in the rear?

The feat is a seemingly impossible one. Perhaps neither the Cubists nor the Futurists have accomplished it successfully; but because it is difficult is no reason why the attempt should not be made.

Theoretically there is nothing to be said against pictures which show what both the *eye* and the *mind's eye* of the artist see.

The works of the ultra-modern men can be unde only by the aid of the imagination, by the aid of the *eye* to see *through,* and *about* and *into* things, to see the conditions, happenings, and significance of things.

Stated in other terms, the extreme modern is no l content to paint what is before his eyes at a given mo and from a given point of view; he is no longer conte act the part of a camera, making reproductions of what front of it. He demands the freedom to walk around subject, fly over it, enter it, find out all about it, and record on canvas the sum and substance of his observa *and* reflections. The result may not look like a cath but if done by a genius it may give a fine impression of tain salient features of the building, inside and out, and a vivid impression of some of its great ceremonies. Why try to paint the *power* as well as the proportions?

◆ ◆ ◆

If the American public found the work of Lehm and Brancusi queer, what would it think of the Fut sculpture?

The two female figures exhibited by Lehmbruck simply decorative elongations of natural forms. In te they were quite conventional. Their modelling was al purely classical lines, far more severely classical than m of the realistic work of Rodin.

The heads by Brancusi were idealistic in the extre the sculptor carried his theories of mass and form so fa deliberately lost all resemblance to actuality. He use subjects as motives rather than models. In this respect h not unlike — though more extreme than — the great Japa and Chinese artists, who use life and nature arbitrarily secure the results they desire.

I have a golden bronze head — a "Sleeping Muse,"

Brancusi—so simple, so severe in its beauty, it might have come from the Orient.

◈ ◈ ◈

Of this head and two other pieces of sculpture exhibited by Brancusi in July, 1913, at the Allied Artists' Exhibition in London, Roger Fry said in "The Nation," August 2:

> Constantin Brancusi's sculptures have not, I think, been seen before in England. His three heads are the most remarkable works of sculpture at the Albert Hall. Two are in brass and one in stone. They show a technical skill which is almost disquieting, a skill which might lead him, in default of any overpowering imaginative purpose, to become a brilliant *pasticheur*. But it seemed to me there was evidence of passionate conviction; that the simplification of forms was no mere exercise in plastic design, but a real interpretation of the rhythm of life. These abstract vivid forms into which he compresses his heads give a vivid presentment of character; they are not empty abstractions, but filled with a content which has been clearly, and passionately apprehended.

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Futurist sculpture, like Futurist painting, starts with a fundamental departure.

All sculpture, classic as well as Impressionistic and Post-Impressionistic, deals with an object or a group of objects. It models and reproduces them *detached* from their environment.

Futurist sculpture seeks to reproduce a figure or an object *attached* to and *a part of* its fleeting and flowing surroundings, its atmosphere, its *medium*.

It goes further; it seeks to convey not only the impression of the truth that a figure is a part of its environment, but that its atmosphere and environment *flows through* the figure and the figure *through* the environment, that *nothing is segregated* but everything *fusing*.

The philosophical thought is old, as old as the earliest Greek philosophy, but the attempt to express the thought in stone, wood, bronze, is new.

We may feel sure the attempt is futile, that it cannot succeed, but our scepticism is no reason why a sculptor in his enthusiasm should not make the attempt.

◆ ◆ ◆

In June and July last a Futurist sculptor, Boccioni, exhibited some of his work in Paris.

One example, "Head — Houses — Light," was literally a conglomerate of a human bust of heroic size, with hands crossed in front, and the following accessories:

On the top of the head the fronts of several small houses, with doors, windows, and all details just as the sculptor saw the houses *many blocks back* of his model. The casual observer would be completely mystified on seeing several house fronts start out of the head of a bust; but when one understands that it is a fundamental belief of the Futurists that *all that is within the vision, actual or imagined, of painter or sculptor is a part of the picture or bust,* the reason why of the houses is plain.

From one shoulder of the figure starts about eighteen inches of a wooden railing and iron grill work, part of a balcony, just as the sculptor glimpsed it a block or so down the street.

A little to the back of the shoulder is a slightly inclined level surface about a foot square; on this surface is the toy figure, an inch high, of a woman in street costume. The figure was probably bought at a toy store, just as the wooden railing and iron grill work might have been picked up at any second-hand shop. The little figure of the woman and the level surface represent some open square that — judging from the diminutive size of the figure — must have been a long distance away, far enough away for a human being to appear no taller than an inch.

The entire bust was crudely colored, and one side of the

BOCCIONI
Head + Houses + Light

face was modelled in downward flowing lines and painted yellow to represent rays of strong sunlight.

The figure was ugly in the extreme; the lines were ugly, the coloring ugly, the technic clumsy; but *as an illustration of a theory* the work was both curious and interesting.

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In the creed of the Futurist are found the following:

1. Sculpture must give life to objects by making sensible *their extension in space,* for no one today can deny that an object continues to where another object begins, and that all things that are about us—automobile, house, tree, street, etc., etc.—traverse our bodies, dividing us into planes and sections, forming an arabesque of curved and straight lines.

This traversing of each object by the planes occupied by all other objects is called in the transcendental terminology of Futurism, "*Compenetration of planes.*" (Here Futurist and Cubist again meet.)

2. A Futurist sculptural *composition* will contain in itself the marvellous mathematical and geometrical elements of modern objects. These objects will not be placed close to the statue, like so many *detached* explanatory attributes or decorative elements, but according to the laws of the new conception of harmony they will be *embodied* in the muscular lines of the body. For example, we may see the wheel of an automobile starting out of the body of a chauffeur, the line of a table traversing the head of a man who is reading, and the pages of his book may project through his chest.

3. The abolition complete of the *line finished* and the *statue isolated!* Throw open the figure like a window and make part of it the surroundings in which it exists. The sidewalk may extend to your table; your head may traverse and include the street, and at the same moment your lamp may unite house to house by its searching rays.

The entire world precipitates itself upon us, amalgam with us, creating a harmony that will not be controlled e by creative intuition.

4. Do not be afraid to go outside one art and rec assistance from others. There is no such thing as paint *alone,* sculpture *alone,* music *alone,* poetry *alone;* there simply *creation.*

Hence if a particular sculptural composition needs so special movement to augment or contrast the rhythm of ensemble, there is no reason why one should not make of a small motor to secure the effect.

5. It is necessary to get rid of the idea, purely liter and traditional, that marble and bronze are the mater that must be used in great sculpture. The sculptor may twenty materials in one work if required to express his i He may use glass, wood, cement, cardboard, leather, cl mirrors, electric lights, etc.

6. It is only by choosing subjects absolutely mod that one can discover new motives and ideas.

7. It is necessary to abandon the nude and the tra tional conception of the statue and the monument.

8. What the Futurist sculpture creates is, in a way, *ideal bridge* that unites the infinite plastic *exterior* with infinite plastic *interior.* That is why the objects *never fin* but they *intersect* with endless combinations both sympath and averse. The feeling of the spectator is at the *center* the work, not aloof and outside, as with traditional sculptu

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All this sounds wildly extravagant, but not absolute incoherent.

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The obvious objection to the attempt of the Futuri sculptor to include in his *composition* an object *and* its enviro

ment is found in his own proposition—*which is philosophically valid*—that *the universe* is the atmosphere, the environment of every object from a grain of sand to a planet.

Hence the Futurist figure that shows a few houses, a bit of a railing, a glimpse of a distant square, is more comprehensive than the conventional bust to only an infinitesimal degree; only *almost infinitesimal fractions* of the *enveloping* universe are shown.

The effect is fragmentary and confusing.

Other sculptors, conspicuously Rodin in some of his work, get the effect of atmosphere and environment by detaching the figure or composition *only partially* from the block of marble or mass of bronze, leaving to the *imagination of the observer* the finishing of the work, the supplying of both environment and atmosphere.

That would seem to be the finer, the purer, the more abstract way.

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In fact, there is an obvious contradiction between the creed of the Futurist sculptor and the Futurist writer.

The former feels impelled to show environment by encumbering his figure with an overwhelming mass of details, houses, railings, sidewalks, petty figures, etc., etc.—all the *qualifying* objects that happen within his vision, leaving nothing to the imagination of his observer; while the Futurist writer would eliminate from literature all adjectival and adverbial words and phrases, leaving the nouns (the simple figures of sculpture) to stand alone.

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Many things can be done in painting that cannot be done in sculpture. A figure may be painted against a background of an entire city, or against the heavens; or it may be painted

in the midst of a battle, or a train wreck; the flight of years can be indicated, centuries may be swept into one canvas.

In sculpture this cannot be done save, in a measure, in such crude mixtures of sculpture, relief, and painted scenes as those large circular panoramas so popular twenty years ago, where the spectator stood *in the center*—where the theory of the Futurist requires him to be—and gazed from life-size figures and objects at his feet across smaller and smaller, until reality imperceptibly joined the painted canvas, which gave a sense of great distance—entire battle-fields.

The Futurist sculptor cannot give this sense of environment and atmosphere by attaching diminutive houses and bits of balconies to the bust of a man.

In reading their extravagant declarations and denunciations of the past it must be remembered that extremes beget extremes, that enthusiasts habitually indulge in extravagant arguments and theories for the purpose of attracting attention and stimulating discussion.

In an address recently delivered in London, the leader of Futurism warned his hearers not to accept too literally the startling extravagances of some of the Futurist manifestoes and literature. He stated frankly that many of the most violent propositions were uttered for the purpose of arousing public attention to what they considered very real evils in our modern life. For instance, when the Futurists cry, "Down with all museums," "Destroy all remains of antiquity," they do not mean that if they were given the power they would do these things, but what they desire is to arouse Italy and the ancient world to the fact that Italy has a position as a *modern* nation. The Futurists resent the attitude of the world toward Rome and Athens; they resent the attitude of travelers who visit those two places solely to look

at the remains of the *ancient world;* they believe that Italy is just as much a *modern nation* as is America, and that Rome is just as much alive as is New York, and they would have people come to Italy, not to see ruins, but to see her factories and industries and places of business. When one rightly considers the matter this is a very rational and patriotic attitude, and it is the only attitude that is wholly consistent with the development and progress of a nation as a *vital fòrce* in the world of *today.*

Viewed in the light of the intense patriotism which is behind some of these wildly extravagant denunciations of the past, they do not seem so devoid of reason.

We in America have no past to oppress us; therefore it is difficult for us to realize the feeling of a modern nation, or a modern city, which the civilized world will not accept as modern, but insists upon viewing as a museum of antiquities.

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The address referred to also said:

"Futurism was first put forward by me for the purpose of renovating and reawakening the Italian race to a true appreciation of the true art in literature as well as in painting and sculpture. Precisely because it has a splendid past, Italy is today in some sort disinherited. The cult of the past is upheld among them by a whole world of interested people, and the Futurist movement in its creative effort is hampered not only by such economic hindrances but by the mental cowardice of people.

"In art you must continually advance; those who stop are already dead, or candidates for death. The Romanticism of artists like Baudelaire and Wagner and Flaubert was inspired by two or three principles which are worn out today. 'Salambo' was the type romance of that old sensibility. In a certain sense such Romanticism is the identification of the

idea of beauty with the idea of woman. That period is past.

"According to our view, poetry is nothing but a more intense, a more exalted, life—and that is why we combat the constant intrusion into it of the 'domestic triangle' in various forms, and which has been its ruin.

"Art, either plastic or active, is not a religion. It is the best part of our strength, of our physiological being. It is, in consequence, absurd to consider it as a system, as something to worship with joined hands; it should express all the intensity of life—its beauty, greatness, its fire, its brutality, its sordidness.

"Futurism in poetry represents a realism profound, rapid, intense—the very complex of our life of today."

In the Annex at the Panama Exposition, San Francisco (1914-1915), there was a collection of Futurist paintings.

The *theories* of Futurism as applied to painting were very well exemplified, but *technically* the paintings were bad beyond description.

There was not a *well-painted* canvas in the entire collection.

To the public it was a room filled with *queer* pictures *badly* painted, and that was unfortunate for Futurism.

It ought to be needless to say that the value of the *theory* of any development in art does not depend upon the *technical* efficiency of its followers, but a theory nevertheless suffers when an entire exhibition consists of canvasses lamentably bad from a technical point of view.

A strip of velvet on a child's drawing, or hairs glued to the wood-carving of a savage seem quite in keeping, but not so on the work of an artist whose methods negative such crude realism.

However, we have only to consider how we accept these things in Japanese wood-carving and sculpture to realize that most of our notions and prejudices are conventional.

XII

VIRILE-IMPRESSIONISM

WHAT is happening in America? Exactly what might be expected in a *young, vigorous,* and *virile* country.

America has been keenly susceptible to art influences from every section. Her students are everywhere, her exhibitions are gathered from the four quarters of the globe. She is very much alive to what Europe is doing, she has long been interested in what China and Japan have done.

While her art is in the main conservative, it is not the conservatism of stubbornness or stolidity, it is rather the conservatism of isolation; but her isolation is a thing of the past. Communication is so frequent, travel so easy, transportation so cheap, that both art and artists flow hither and thither almost unrestricted.

In spite of this freedom of inter-communication, the development of American art has been along independent lines—at least along *one* independent line, a line so individual in its characteristics it deserves the name *American*-Impressionism, or, more generically, Virile-Impressionism.

By Virile-Impressionism is meant a manner of viewing nature and a mode of painting quite different from the more superficial refinements of Impressionism on the one hand and the extraordinary developments of Post-Impressionism on the other.

Let us try to make this clear.

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As already noted, Impressionism attained a logical end in the painting of brilliant light effects, especially in the works of the Neo-Impressionists, the pointillists.

In short, the drift of Impressionism in France was to more and more brilliant reflections of the *surfaces* of th

This extreme *attentuation* was quite foreign to the of America, which is more *material* and *practical.*

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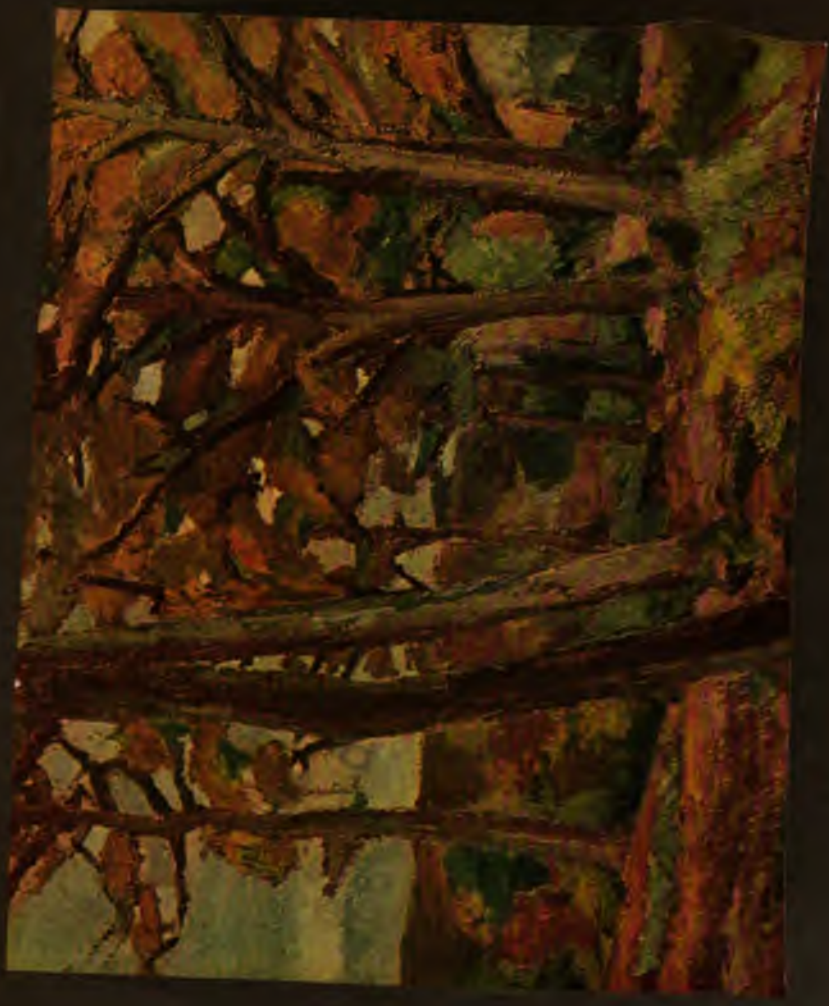
It may be our fault, it is certainly our virtue, that we material and practical in our outlook. In a big, sane we are *dreamers.* Only dreamers could carry the Pa Canal to completion, and, to mention lesser works, dreamers could build such terminals as the Pennsylv and New York Central in New York, and such buildings the Woolworth and the Manhattan. But our dreams alw take practical shape. We are a nation of inventors *beca* we are a nation of dreamers.

Hence, while our artists were quick to respond to that is good and strong in Impressionism, they found lit satisfaction in the ultra-refinements of Neo-Impressionism.

The result was that when France pressed Impressioni to its extreme, a normal and healthy reaction took place American art.

Many of the strong painters of America began doi things of their own. They still adhered closely to natur They remained Impressionists in the older significance the term, but they painted not the *surfaces* of things but th *substance*—in short, they were *Cézanne*-Impressionists distinguished from *Monet*-Impressionists.

For instance, Winslow Homer was a great and true Im pressionist, but he had nothing in common with the Neo- Impressionists, and little in common with Monet. He had, however, a great deal in common with Cézanne. His pictures give one an impression of *nature herself,* of the power of the sea, the adamant of the rocks, the significance of life, yet each one is an accurate transcript of what he saw. He did



not go into his studio and *create* pictures out of his imagination; he let his imagination play upon nature, but nature controlled all he did.

He was, in a sense, the greatest of *American*-Impressionists—he was a Virile-Impressionist.

There are many Virile-Impressionists in Europe, but they are so many individuals; here Virile-Impressionism is the result of racial, national, geographical conditions.

It was inevitable that Impressionism in America should follow along virile and substantial lines rather than along nervous and superficial; it is the way the country is built.

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Sargent is a Virile-Impressionist. He paints striking *likenesses,* but he also paints marvellous *characterizations;* that is, he gets beneath the skin of his sitters and paints them as they *are,* not as they seem. His sense of color is very deficient; many of his portraits from a decorative point of view are almost the reverse of pleasing; he had not the faintest appreciation of the subtle refinements of the things Whistler strove so long and earnestly to achieve; in his best things he is strong and direct to the point of brutality—all of which is characteristic of Virile-Impressionism, and exactly what one would expect from a vigorous, muscular, frank American. Though Sargent spends most of his time on the other side, he is no more English than French; his pictures fit into an American exhibition far more comfortably than into the Royal Academy or the old Salon.

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The attitude of American painters toward the extreme modern developments is both curious and interesting.

On the opening of the International Exhibition there was an outburst of violent indignation from the older men, ordinary speech failed to express their feelings, and they rushed into print with language as violent as the press would accept. All that made lively reading and lent zest to current literature.

Six months later this feeling of angry opposition largely subsided. As an illustration, one of the bitterest of the Academicians accepted as a "good idea" the organization of an *independent* exhibition, open to artists *without the intervention of a jury,* under the auspices of the National Academy, as soon as a building could be provided that would adequately house all exhibitions.

Again, the very conservative authorities of a large art institute listened receptively to the suggestion that every art museum owed the public two things in the way of exhibitions:

First, exhibitions selected by juries which would give the public the benefit of the best expert judgment available.

Second, exhibitions wherein painters and sculptors barred by the juries would have opportunities to present their works *to the judgment of the public.*

In short, suggestions that would not have been listened to before the International are now discussed as quite within the range of possibilities.

There is no danger of these things coming to pass in the *immediate* future; there is still too much latent opposition, but the virulent has measurably subsided.

So much for the *older* men.

The younger were naturally much more tolerant. They were more — they were both *curious* and *receptive.* Many of them searched with eager eye for valuable hints, for ways and means to perfect their own art.

It was a great pleasure to watch and talk with these young men, the *rising* generation.

Many of them, to their own surprise, found they had been working along modern lines without fully realizing it.

They had not cut loose from Impressionism, but they were doing things *constructively* rather than *superficially;* they were painting like Cézanne rather than Monet.

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If the attempt were made to name these younger men, the result would be injustice to many whose works are unknown to the writer, and the argument would be confused.

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The younger American painters are so strong, so virile, so muscular — let us say — that instinctively they lean toward the painting of things in a big, broad *constructive* manner; the refinements of *superficial* impressionism do not interest them.

At the same time they have not reached the point where they are willing to let go of nature entirely and do purely *creative* things.

Perhaps this is just as well.

America — like every new country — is so essentially practical, practical in even its most imaginative flights, that it is difficult for its painters to retire within themselves and do things that have only an esoteric or metaphysical relation to actualities; that sort of thing in both art and literature is much easier on the continent than in either England or America; it is especially easy in the highly charged and hyper-artificial atmosphere of Paris.

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Purely *creative* work is done in a masterly manner — in his best things — by Arthur Davies. It is attempted and most

successfully by Kenneth Hayes Miller, to mention only two of many.

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"The Bridge," by Kroll, is a good example of American-Impressionistic art. It is one of a series of pictures of lower New York, each painted "on the spot," some from roofs and high places difficult of access and dangerous.

It is comparatively easy to go out and make a few sketches of portions of a city like New York and then retire to the studio and paint faint and superficial reproductions, such inadequate reproductions as appear on the walls of any metropolitan exhibition; it is quite another thing to plant one's easel on slippery rocky heights and day after day, in the cold, paint from nature as directly as Monet ever painted.

It takes imagination and enthusiasm and the superb confidence of youth to attempt such colossal things, and it takes an unusual technical facility to "get away" with the attempt.

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Winslow Homer's name has been mentioned and mentioned with the respect due one of the greatest painters this country has produced, but the besetting weakness of picture buyers is undue reverence for the man who has "arrived," above all for the master who is dead.

Better pictures are being painted in America today than Homer painted, and he would be the first to say so if living.

Since he painted his best pictures the art of painting has advanced, painters have improved their technic and broadened their outlook.

There are pictures being painted today by young Americans that will be worth far more than Homer's, and that is said with the full realization that no lover of what is big and

strong in art could ask for more virile impressions of nature than those of Homer at his best.

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From Virile-Impressionism one should distinguish another development which may be called *Poetic*-Impressionism.

If Homer is chosen as a conspicuous example of Virile-Impressionism, George Inness will serve equally well to illustrate what is meant by Poetic-Impressionism — Impressionism *plus* certain *transforming* poetic qualities.

In a sense Inness's impression of a given landscape was just as strong as Homer's, just as virile, but it was less literal, he could not refrain from transforming as he transcribed, in short of creating.

A room filled with landscapes by Inness yields a distinctively *subjective* feeling as compared with a room filled with Homers.

Quite irrespective of the comparative merits of the two men as artists the observer may enjoy today the one more than the other, tomorrow *vice versa* according to the *observer's mood.*

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When the Morgan pictures were hanging in the Metropolitan Museum, acclaimed in parrot phrases by critics and visited by multitudes, it was a delight, a veritable refreshing of the soul, to get away from the smell of the dead into the living atmosphere of the Hearn collection and see pictures that *belong to us,* to our own times, that are flesh of our flesh, bone of our bone.

Every picture in the Morgan collection had its vital relation to life *once* — *when* it was painted and *where* it was painted.

Not one has even a remote relation to the life of America.

They are valuable, very valuable, in the sense that tapestries, old armor, old brocades, old pottery, etc., etc., valuable—valuable as illustrating the history and development of painting, and beautiful as many old things are beautiful—but *not half so beautiful as the living and breathing things of today.*

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But how can we appreciate the beauty of the things painters and sculptors are doing when we are blind to the superb, the magnificent beauty of what our engineer-builders are doing—our *steel "sky-scrapers"*—America's greatest achievement and unique contribution to the arts—an *absolutely new architecture?*

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Though the artist might have been quick to disavow such intention, it is obvious that there is much Post-Impressionism in John W. Alexander's work.

In both his technic and his inspiration he is very Post-Impressionistic.

In the delightful sweep of his line, and the purely decorative use of color, he departs far from nature.

The attitude of Sargent toward a model or sitter and that of Alexander are diametrically opposed, the one seeks to paint a vigorous *characterization* of the person before him, the other seeks to *create a picture,* and to do so by a technic so different from that commonly used it still occasions much of the wonderment it excited years ago.

Some of the portraits by Alexander are conspicuous on the walls of an exhibition for very much the same reason such a picture as Van Rees's "Maternity" would be conspicuous.

The landscape and cattle piece by Segonzac are both examples of Virile-Impressionism. But Segonzac has painted many other pictures that are Post-Impressionistic—arbitrary in design and execution, and still others that are both Virile-Impressionistic and Post-Impressionistic, such as his large canvas, "A Pastoral," shown at the International, wherein the cattle are Virile-Impressionistic creations while the nude figures and the entire scheme are purely Post-Impressionistic.

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The two landscapes by Vlaminck and Charmy are good examples of the transition state from Virile-Impressionism to Post-Impressionism.

They are sufficiently close to nature to be Impressionistic in the large sense of the term; at the same time they are so arbitrary and decorative in technic as to be quite Post-Impressionistic. They are about as far removed from the average exhibition of Impressionistic pictures as they are from the creative and abstract art of the Cubists, yet they will hang with either without unduly shocking the spectator's sense of the fitness of things.

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The three Cardoza's are purely Post-Impressionistic; they are charming examples of what might be called *romantic* Post-Impressionism as distinguished from the more *abstract* conceptions of the Cubists; they have no more relation to life than a fairy tale, rather less if anything, for they are primarily decorative rather than significant.

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Zak's "Shepherd" is also Post-Impressionistic, romantic in feeling like Cardoza's, but of deeper human significance.

The utter loneliness of the shepherd's life, the monotony of its outlook, the note of resignation, are all as subtly indicated as are any of the human qualities in Millet's pictures of peasant life; yet in technic and composition the picture is essentially Post-Impressionistic, a decorative and musical work of the *creative* imagination.

In October, 1913, Kandinsky wrote me a very enthusiastic letter regarding the work of Albert Bloch, a young American working in Munich, saying, "He works most energetically, accomplishes much, makes fine progress, and constantly gains in the form of his inner expression. Him, too, I really can recommend warmly." That was my introduction to Albert Bloch. At the time I knew nothing of his work. On the strength of some photographs, a few letters of his own and this letter of Kandinsky, I mentioned him in the first edition of this book. Since then I have lived with a good deal of his work and through his pictures and a rather extensive correspondence I have become fairly well acquainted with his unusual personality.

I have the feeling that he is by long odds the strongest American painter on the other side who is working in the modern vein. His progress in the few years he has worked in Munich has been little short of marvelous. I have some of his earlier paintings and it would be difficult to convince anyone they are by the same man who painted his more recent. His technic is so sure that he is able to give free play to his imagination in the composition of his works, and all his works are essentially works of the imagination.

On first impression one feels the strength and solidity of Bloch's work. He uses the entire gamut of color with an absolutely sure hand and he may run the entire gamut on a

single canvas. There is nothing finicky or decadent about his art. It is big, wholesome and very beautiful in its purely imaginative qualities.

Bloch's home is — or was — St. Louis and he once did some drawings for "The Mirror." Speaking of his personality, William Marion Reed wrote:

"He is a man of much force, which you might almost call stubbornness, and nobody can tell him anything, but I happen to know that he is willing to endure privations and obloquy for the idea that possesses him, and so he has my unlimited respect."

With the invaluable assistance of Messrs. Arthur T. Aldis, Howard Shaw, and Frederic C. Bartlett, an exhibition of twenty-five of Bloch's paintings was arranged at the Chicago Art Institute for the summer of 1915, and afterwards the entire exhibition was taken to the City Art Museum, St. Louis.

The twenty-five paintings in that exhibition covered about six years and showed astonishing developments always in the direction of greater freedom and finer abstraction. For instance, "Factory Chimneys" painted some years ago is so realistic it might hang in any exhibition and attract little attention save for a certain simplicity and strength. At the other extreme his "Night I" is almost a pure creation of the imagination as well as a beautiful composition of line and color. It is, as a matter of fact, a synthesis of Bloch's impressions of Munich by night, a summary of things he saw and felt during his wanderings about the city; it is vision on vision, dream on dream, a composite of a hundred glimpses, the fusion of a hundred impressions; it represents no part of the city, but *is* the city by night. Of this particular canvas a distinguished Japanese art-lover said, "I would rather have it than any modern painting I have seen."

Again his "Summer Night" is an exquisitely poetic com-

position. It is filled with color and yet the general effect is that of cool silvery gray. It is exceedingly fine in design.

The painting called "Lamentation" gives a powerful effect. The figures convey the feeling of lamentation far more strongly than if they more literally resembled human beings; they are sorrowing masses as distinguished from mere weeping men and women. Besides they are fine harmonies of line and color, decorative as well as significant.

Of these two paintings he said in a letter:

"Not one in a hundred likes 'Summer Night' because they *felt* summer night in the picture, its depth of lyrical feeling, the *intensity* of yearning, dreaming. They like it for its obvious fault, its one glaring weakness: for a certain conventionalization (what you call 'tightness') wholly unintended, a purely decorative quality which has in my remembrance almost spoiled the picture for me. But it is a good picture. Don't distrust Beethoven because the mob runs to hear the 9th Symphony: They probably flock because the soloists have been widely advertised. They'd come in even greater crowds if their pet football or baseball hero were at the conductor's desk.

"You are quite right 'Summer Night' marks a period which I have definitely passed beyond, while 'Lamentation' marked only the beginning of another. Of course I've done a good many things in the spirit of a 'Summer Night' since, but they were things I had had in work or in my mind for a long, long time, and some are not finished even yet. So for instance a frieze for a music room recently finished: purely decorative in intention (a thing over 8 ft. long) had been with me for over five years. It is in the same spirit as 'Summer Night' but differently treated and conceived. Other things also. I shall send you photos one day. The newer things though are more along the path opened up by the 'Peaks and

the Harlequin with the three Pierrots.' I have half a dozen things in work at present deeper and stronger in vision than anything I have ever had under my hand: if I don't spoil them.—We shall see!"

He has painted a series of clowns which may well be described as humoresques. He asks, "Why may not the painter have his moments of relaxation as well as the musician?" He possesses a sense of humor that is biting and in some of his paintings his attitude toward life is almost cynical.

"'Clowns II' is to my mind in some ways the best of my series of clown pictures, of which I have done four thus far. It certainly strikes a note which is so far missing in your collection of my work, and which, if you value completeness, certainly belongs there; in fact, I think it strikes a note which up to now has been singularly absent from painting in general; the note of *pure fun,* of unbridled extravagance, and frolic. I have gone even farther along this line in 'Clowns III and IV,' but in many ways 'Clowns II' remains with me the favorite. When I speak of doing these things in a spirit of pure fun, of romping frolicsomeness, I do not mean, of course, that I have set out consciously or purposely to be funny. As with all my pictures, the clowns are the expression of a mood, and why the expression of this sort of mood need be less completely artistic in its resulting form than that of any other more 'serious' mood, I cannot imagine."

When asked whether he cared to attempt any notes in connection with an exhibition he wrote:

"The idea of *furnishing a diagram* has always been abhorrent to me. I should be strongly in favor of leaving the public to form its own idea of the pictures, however uncomplimentary to myself the idea may be. The few to whom the work may speak, will need no explanation. The others don't count. No explanation on earth can make them *feel* the things; and

that's all that Art appreciation amounts to in the long run. One thing *I beg;* don't, if you can help it, allow the papers to treat the exhibition as a sensation. Don't, *please,* let them call me Futurist, Expressionist, or any other kind of 'ist.'"

Regarding his own work he wrote in 1914:

"I never trust my own judgment in regard to my work, for I never know at first whether I care for a picture I've just completed or not. It often takes me months to decide.

"I feel that I have just turned another corner in my development. My last things (as well as I can judge) seem to mark a great advance over the ones immediately preceding them. My season of lying fallow which extended practically over the whole winter, has certainly benefited me despite the irksomeness of enforced idleness. I have gained greater freedom, and breadth, I feel. And at the same time thrown off the danger of falling into one or two little mannerisms which I believe were threatening me" (as for instance in two pictures he mentions).

Two years later, in May, 1916, he writes:

"Klee and I had an exhibition at Berlin. . . . Two of my later things, 'The Death Bed' and 'Figures on a Dark Ground,' a variant of Mr. Macomber's 'Kneeling Figures,' are now being shown with an exhibition of so-called 'Expressionists and Cubists' (loathesome words!), about forty canvasses in all, at the Ducal Museum at Brunswick.

"The *New* (brand new!) Munich Secession has invited me to send work to this summer's annual exhibition.

"My Barmen and Essen exhibitions are postponed until after the war."

Speaking of a portrait he says, "It was a rotten failure from my own point of view but at least a 'likeness.' I am no portraitist unless I am absolutely in the mood. The portrait was not a commission. I asked a lady to sit. I thought she

GAUDIER-BRZESKA
Boy with a Cony

would help me *to paint a picture* (that is all I think of when a so-called portrait is concerned) but I fell down so badly on this thing that the lady's father fell in love with it, and insisted on buying it."

These brief extracts give an impression of the strength and sincerity of the man. His work wherever seen speaks for itself.

I have lived with Kandinsky's and Bloch's pictures several years and like them more and more. They practically line the side walls of a room at one end of which hangs a full length Manet and at the other end a full length Whistler—neither artists nor laymen have ever noted or seemed to feel any conflict. The brilliant canvasses make a fine setting for the two more sober, illustrating the fact that *good paintings* of all schools, and all times hang well together.

XIII

SCULPTURE

DEVELOPMENTS in sculpture do not always parallel those in painting.

In comparison painting is so facile that it lends itself easily to experiments, responds quickly to moods and fancies. In short, painting is more susceptible — more volatile.

Not that the painter and the sculptor are different human beings, but the mediums whereby they express themselves are so different, and the demands for their work are so unequal, that sculpture usually lags behind in new ventures. The sculptor, however great his desire, cannot afford to make the experiments the painter makes, or at the best he can only embody his new ideas and aspirations in uninviting plaster casts.

He is bound by some of the conditions that hamper the architect, one of which is difficulty in finding a patron who will take the risk and pay the expense of innovations.

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The reaction in sculpture has been from the *classic* along two opposed lines:

A. Back to nature.

B. Purely creative.

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The movement back to nature, to a closer observation of life, even to the rendering of the human figure with brutal frankness, is exemplified in the work of Matisse, work so *ugly* — to most people — it seems a grotesque caricature of

BRANCUSI
M'lle Poganey

LENDBRUCK
Kneeling Woman

the human form, but the human form today is never so symmetrical, so perfect as in classic sculpture, and one suspects the Greeks themselves idealized their young men and maidens.

Long before Matisse, Rodin started the "return to nature." His "Age of Bronze," 1877, was so literal a transcript it was denounced as a cast from life; sculptors and critics refused to believe human fingers could model so perfect an impression. His "Saint John," "Eve," "Bourgeois of Calais," "Le Penseur," "La Belle Heaulmière," to mention only a few, were all created in a spirit diametrically opposed to the classic — yet Rodin is a most intelligent lover of the classic.

Per contra, most of Rodin's marbles are a fine mixture of the classic and purely modern — of the *classic* and the *romantic.*

The point here is that in some of his bronzes he exhibits as clear and merciless an observation of nature as Matisse or any other modern. It may be said once for all that in the number and *variety* of things he does, in the manner in which he links past and present, Rodin stands quite alone among sculptors. If he has little sympathy with the extreme sculpture of the hour it is because life is short and in his life time he has covered so vast a territory, responded to so many impulses, ancient and modern, he is not unnaturally reluctant to embark upon new experiments or interest himself vitally in what others are doing.

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The best American sculpture, even more than American painting, is solidly virile-impressionistic, notably the work of such men as Barnard and Borghlum. Davidson has one foot firmly planted within the confines of Post-Impressionism, but he has by no means cut loose from the past. His "Decorative Panel" in the Exhibition was purely post-impression-

istic, a work of the imagination, while his figures were virile-impressionistic.

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It is only by comparing the work of these new men with that of St. Gaudens, French, MacMonies—to mention no others—that one begins to rightly understand what is meant by the "*reaction to nature.*"

There is plenty of pure *observation* and plenty of fine *imagination* in the work of those three men, but there is also much of the purely classical, and not one of them showed or shows any desire to break with tradition, while the very essence of the modern movement is a disregard, conscious or unconscious, for tradition; in many of the new men there is a violent revolt against the domination of the past.

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It is when we come to the work of Brancusi and Archipanko that we find the most startling examples of the reaction along purely creative lines.

Nature is purposely left far behind, as far behind as in Cubist pictures, and for very much the same reasons.

Of Brancusi something has been said already.

Of all the sculpture in the International Exhibition the two pieces that excited the most ridicule were Brancusi's egg-shaped portrait of Mlle. Pogany and "Family Life" by Archipanko.

Both are *creative* works, products of the imagination, but in their inspiration they are fundamentally different.

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In his symmetrical oval head with the spiral masses where the neck would be, it is apparent the sculptor's interest is in the play of line and relation of masses, no profound human problem troubled him. That there is a relation between the strange shape of the head and his theories of life and art no

BOCCIONI
Spiral Expansion of Muscles in Action

MATISSE
Portrait Heads

serious observer of his other work could doubt, but his unusual technic over-shadows other interest.

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In his "Family Life," the group of man, woman, child, Archipanko deliberately subordinated all thought of beauty of form to an attempt to realize in stone the relation in life that is at the very basis of human and social existence.

Spiritual, emotional, and mathematical intellectuality, too, is behind the family group of Archipanko. This group, in plaster, might have been made of dough. It represents a featureless, large, strong male — one gets the impression of strength from humps and lumps — an impression of a female, less vivid, and the vague knowledge that a child is mixed up in the general embrace. The faces are rather blocky, the whole group with arms intertwined — arms that end suddenly, no hands, might be the sketch of a sculpture to be. But when one gets an insight it is intensely more interesting. It is, eventually, clear that in portraying his idea of family love the sculptor has built his figures with pyramidal strength; they are grafted together with love and geometric design, their limbs are bracings, ties of strength, they represent, not individuals, but the structure itself of family life. Not family life as one sees it, but the unseen, the deep emotional unseen, and in making his group when the sculptor found himself verging upon the seen — that is, when he no longer felt the unseen — he stopped. Therefore the hands were not essential. And this expression is made in the simplest way. Some will hoot at it, but others will feel the respect that is due one who simplifies and expresses the deep things of life. You may say that such is literature in marble — well, it is the modernest sculpture.*

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The group is so angular, so *Cubist,* so ugly according to accepted notions, that few look long enough to see what the sculptor means; yet strange as the group was it undeniably gave a powerful impression of the binding, the *blending* character of the family tie, a much more powerful impression than groups in conventional academic pose could give.

* Writer in "The Times-Democrat," New Orleans.

In considering the extreme modern movement in sculpture it must not be forgotten that groups and figures just as strange have been done in the past—that even queerer and more grotesque things have been used to adorn churches and altars.

True, those sculptures and carvings are *naive* and *primitive,* but may not the naive and primitive be closer to life and to life's great truths than the sophisticated and classical?

That is the question.

The answer of the moderns is that the swing of the pendulum in art is from the naive and primitive through the more and more conventional to the fixed and lifeless mold of the classic and academic, then back again to the naive, traversing the romantic, in its course, both ways.

In June, 1915, a young modern sculptor, Gaudier-Brzeska, lost his life in the war. Not long before his death he wrote the following and sent it to friends in London:

"I have been fighting for two months and I can now gage the intensity of life.

"Human masses teem and move, are destroyed and crop up again.

"Horses are worn out in three weeks, die by the roadside.

"Dogs wander, are destroyed, and others come along.

"With all the destruction that works around us nothing is changed, even superficially. Life is the same strength, the moving agent that permits the small individual to assert himself.

"The bursting shells, the volleys, wire-entanglements, projectors, motors, the chaos of battle do not alter in the least the outlines of the hill we are besieging. A company of partridges scuttle along before our very trench.

"It would be folly to seek artistic emotions amid these little works of ours.

MATISSE
Back of Woman

ERBSLOH
Young Woman

"This paltry mechanism, which serves as a purge to overnumerous humanity.

"This war is a great remedy.

"In the individual it kills arrogance, self-esteem, pride.

"It takes away from the masses numbers upon numbers of unimportant units, whose economic activities become noxious as the recent trades crises have shown us.

"My views on sculpture remain absolutely the same.

"It is the vortex of will, of decision, that begins.

"I shall derive my emotions solely from the arrangement of surfaces. I shall present my emotions by the arrangement of my surfaces, the planes and lines by which they are defined.

"Just as this hill, where the Germans are solidly entrenched, gives me a nasty feeling, solely because its gentle slopes are broken up by earthworks, which throw long shadows at sunset — just so shall I get feeling, of whatsoever definition, from a statue according to its slopes, varied to infinity.

"I have made an experiment. Two days ago I pinched from an enemy a mauser rifle. Its heavy, unwieldy shape swamped me with a powerful image of brutality.

"I was in doubt for a long time whether it pleased or displeased me.

"I found that I did not like it.

"I broke the butt off and with my knife I carved in it a design, through which I tried to express a gentler order of feeling, which I preferred.

"But I will emphasize that my design got its effect (just as the gun had) from a very simple composition of lines and planes."

XIV

IN CONCLUSION

TO GATHER the loose ends of the argument in one skein.

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Impressionism was the natural, the inevitable reaction from the romantic and story-telling art of the forties, fifties, and sixties — a return to *nature* from the *studio,* to works of the *observation* from works of the *imagination.*

Impressionism developed along three diverging lines:

A. *Superficial* Impressionism — Monet.

B. *Realistic* Impressionism — Manet.

C. *Substantial* Impressionism — Cézanne.

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A. *Superficial* — the painting of light effects, the impressionism of Monet, culminated in the extreme refinements of the pointillists, the Neo-Impressionists, Seurat and Signac.

In superficial Impressionism the last word seems to have been said for the time being. Any number of delightful pictures — light effects — are being painted, and will continue to be painted, but the early enthusiasm has largely subsided.

Superficial Impressionism leads naturally to the painting of pure color effects — *color music, orphism, compositional* painting. After the last word in the *observation* of light effects *Post*-Impressionistic attempts to *create* pure color effects, irrespective of natural — that is a logical reaction.

B. *Realistic* Impressionism penetrates a little deeper. While Monet and his followers, Signac and Seurat, dealt more and more with the play of light on the *surface* of things, Manet and his followers painted closer to the *heart* of things.

While Monet was content to paint a hay stack twenty times in as many different lights, Manet preferred a touch of *life* and *character* in his pictures. While he was first and last a painter, he was not so absorbed in securing purely technical effects as to be wholly blind to the *human* element, hence his wonderful portraits, his bullfights, his glimpses of city life—pictures *big* in more senses than one.

Still he and his followers were primarily interested in the *aspect* of things, the *characteristics* as distinguished from the fundamental *character* of things. He penetrated far deeper than Monet, so much deeper the two had little in common, but he did not get so close to the heart that he forgot the skin; he was always a painter of *appearances,* but in a *big* as distinguished from a *superficial* way.

The realistic Impressionism of Manet has by no means run its course. Some of the finest painting in the world has been done and is being done along this line. It is the line of Franz Hals and Velasquez; it is the line of men so different as Whistler and Sargent in their best portraits.

The natural reaction from perfection in this line is higher accentuation of characteristics—in the extreme *caricature.*

That is, given the last word in the painting of character by great men in a *solid* way, the logical attempts of new men or lesser men will be the indication of character in a lighter and more superficial way. The penetrating *observation* of the older men gives way to the keen and playful *fancies* of the younger. The same sitter yields with the former a powerful portrait, with the latter a fascinating picture which may be quite as *revealing* both as a likeness and as a characterization.

C. *Substantial* Impressionism is not so easy to define and differentiate. It is far from *superficial* but has much in common with *realistic.*

It is easiest to simply say it is the Impressionism of

Cézanne and those who have read what has already been said about Cézanne will understand.

Cézanne was not content to paint either the *surface* or the *characteristics* of things or people; he sought to go *deeper*, to get at the very *substance* and to place on canvas their elemental qualities.

As a natural result the longer he painted the *less* interesting his pictures became *superficially*, but the *greater* their interest *fundamentally*.

While Monet became more and more a *popular* painter, a painter for the dealer and the buyer, Cézanne became more and more a *painter's painter*, doing things that only the technically skilled could rightly appreciate.

Interested solely in the profoundest problems of his art and painting only for those who had a very great knowledge of art, he attracted comparatively few followers; the path he followed promised little in the way of immediate fame and rewards.

Still during his last years he had his ardent admirers and after his death his simple, strong *constructive, elemental* pictures began to be widely appreciated.

They make no pretense to the superficial charm of color or composition that attracts the average observer, but they *fascinate* every man who studies things long enough to even partially understand what the artist was so earnestly trying to do.

Substantial or Cézanne Impressionism led naturally to the Virile-Impressionism of today, a way of seeing and painting things that is a compound of the Impressionism of Manet with that of Cézanne.

There is a great and glorious future for Virile-Impressionism. Some of the greatest portraits and pictures in the world will be painted with the penetrating vision of a

Cézanne, modified by the clear, cool observation of a Manet.

The logical reaction from carrying observation of nature to the extent Cézanne carried it is painting of the substance of things *creatively, theoretically,* as in *Cubism.*

Cézanne carried the use of planes *imitatively* so far that it was but a step to their use *arbitrarily and scientifically.*

Substantial Impressionism leads naturally to substantial Post-Impressionism; or in other words, the *substance* of things painted impressionistically (more or less imitatively) leads logically to the painting of the *substance* of things *creatively* = *Post*-Impressionistically.

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When this book was written, it was predicted that America would be quick to absorb all that is good in the extreme modern developments. This is coming to pass rapidly.

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Every Art Exhibition held since has shown the effects of the International in two ways:

First, in the work of new men.

Second, in the effect upon the work of the older men.

The new men have forced their way in against violent opposition, and year by year they appear in increasing numbers.

It is, however, the influence of the new upon the work of the older men that one finds most interesting from a psychological point of view.

It is a matter of comment in the press and by casual visitors that the annual exhibitions held in the larger cities have assumed a "life," a "brilliancy," a "freedom" — call it what you will — not known before the International.

Juries of selection have yielded reluctantly and admitted hundreds of pictures they would have rejected unanimously four years ago. The new art has had and is having its effect.

Many an older painter has consciously or unconsciously changed his methods of both *observation* and *execution*.

Painting generally has been "*keyed up*."

Interior decorations and furnishings have been "keyed up."

We have become familiar with and learned to like more brilliant color schemes and contrasts.

There is no question but that our *pictorial outlook* and *appreciations* have *broadened*.

The net result is that while we have parted with none of the *old*, we have gained the *new*.

There is not a Rembrandt the less in the world, but there is a Picasso, a Matisse, a Kandinsky, a Bloch, the more, not one of the four may prove a Rembrandt, that is not the question, but each of them has given us a *startlingly new outlook*.

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Naturally the dealers are greatly worried by this sudden upsetting of public *taste* and *curiosity*.

Up to four years ago the dealers were reasonably sure of the "best sellers"; they knew the men it was safe to buy and keep.

Today they are in the predicament of the livery-stable keepers of fifteen years ago, whose ancient business was ruined almost overnight by the advent of the automobile.

Some dealers are shrewdly adjusting themselves to changed conditions, others content themselves with denouncing the new, still others are springing up who devote themselves to only the new.

Of course, from the average dealer's point of view the new art "does not pay"—that is the trouble.

As one prominent Fifth Avenue dealer remarked, "If I could sell a carload of these pictures a month it would not pay our rent, we can't afford to sell low-priced pictures"—*true*, but also *significant*.

Whether a buyer gets a *picture* or not he *must pay the rent*.

APPENDIX I

EXHIBITIONS AT 291 FIFTH AVENUE

DURING a number of years prior to 1913 Mr. Alfred Stieglitz gave exhibitions of extreme modern work in his Small Photo-Secession Gallery, 291 Fifth Avenue, New York, and the International was the outcome, the logical culmination of these earlier efforts.

Mr. Stieglitz prepared the following chronological narrative:

In the end of November, 1906, "291" ("Photo-Secession Gallery," "Little Gallery," etc., etc.) was opened with an exhibition of pictorial photography. The exhibition represented the best work of Steichen, Frank Eugene, Kasebier, Clarence White, Stieglitz, Coburn, Brigman, Herbert G. French, and about thirty others, all Americans.

This exhibition was followed up by a series of exhibitions — usually one-man — of the picked work which had been done in pictorial photography the world over.

In 1907 the first exhibition not devoted to photography was that of Miss Pamela Coleman Smith. This exhibition created a sensation. At the time it aroused the ire of most of the New York critics.

Following this there were shown Willie Geiger's (Munich) best etchings and Ex Libris. This was the first show of his in America.

But the real beginning, I suppose, of the so-called *Modern* work shown at "291" was the exhibition of about sixty of Rodin's choicest drawings. These were selected by Rodin and Steichen for the special exhibition. The exhibition aroused intense indignation in New York amongst the critics and amongst most painters (men like Chase, Alexander, and others

of this type feeling that such things were not meant for the public).

April, 1908, Matisse was introduced to the American public for the first time. This exhibition of Matisse's represented the complete evolution of Matisse from his academic period up to date. It included etchings, drawings, water colors, lithographs, and oil paintings.

January, 1909, the work of Marius De Zayas was introduced for the first time.

March, 1909, John Marin and Alfred Maurer (the "new" Maurer) were introduced. The work of these Americans seemed to upset the equilibrium of the academicians even more than the "jokes" of Rodin and Matisse.

May, 1909, Marsden Hartley was introduced to the public for the first time.

December, 1909, Toulouse Lautrec Exhibition. A very choice collection of his lithographs. First Lautrec Exhibition in America.

February, 1910, second Marin Exhibition.

March, 1910, exhibition of the work of "Younger American Painters": Arthur G. Dove, Arthur B. Carles, L. Fellows, Marsden Hartley, Putnam Brindley, John Marin, Alfred Maurer, Steichen, Max Weber. This was the first collective exhibition of Modern work by Americans.

April, 1910, second Rodin Exhibition. The very latest drawings of Rodin were shown, together with eleven of his earliest ones. At the same time the best small bronze of the "Penseur" (loaned by Mrs. John W. Simpson) was exhibited.

November, 1910, Exhibition of lithographs by Cézanne, Renoir, Manet, and Toulouse Lautrec. Together with these, drawings and paintings by Henri Rousseau, just deceased. This exhibition introduced Rousseau for the first time to America, as well as it introduced Cézanne.

January, 1911, Exhibition by Max Weber, American.

February, 1911, Marin Exhibition (third).

March, 1911, a series of Cézanne water colors. The first one-man show of Cézanne's in America. These water colors were most carefully selected and really represent a side of Cézanne which is underestimated by all those, even Cézanne lovers, who do not fully understand Cézanne importance.

April, 1911, Picasso. Drawings, lithographs, water colors, etc. A series of eighty showing the complete evolution of Picasso. The first introduction of Picasso to America and the first exhibition anywhere of Picasso held in this sense.

February, 1912, second Hartley exhibition.

February, 1912, first Arthur G. Dove exhibition.

March, 1912, sculptures and latest drawings by Matisse. First introduction to America of Matisse, the sculptor.

April, 1912, Exhibition of Children's Work, showing relationship of that to much of the spirit of so-called "Modern" work, first exhibition of its kind held in America.

December, 1912, drawings and paintings by A. Walkowitz.

January, 1913, fourth Marin Exhibition — the now famous New York skyscraper series were shown.

March, 1913, Picabia's New York work. The first one-man show of Picabia held in America.

April, 1913, Exhibition of De Zaya's abstract caricature. Possibly the most *modern* expression of the human portrait.

Incidentally, without having had official shows, the work of Eli Nadelman (Paris) and Manolo, was introduced to America by examples of their work being shown.

November-December, 1913, second A. Walkowitz Exhibition — practically an exhibition of abstractions only.

January, 1914, Marsden Hartley (third Hartley Ex.) — paintings produced during Hartley's two years' sojourn in Paris and Berlin.

February, 1914, second Children's Work Exhibition — children aged 5-11 (untaught and unguided).

March, 1914, Brancusi Exhibition — sculpture in Wood, Marble, Bronze (first one-man Brancusi Exhibition in America).

April, 1914, Exhibition Frank Burty (Paris) — introduction to America.

November-December, 1914, Negro Art and African Sculpture — the first exhibition of its kind in any country as a medium of art expression.

December, 1914-January, 1915, Picasso & Braque — Paintings and Drawings — new work.

December, 1914-January, 1915, "Kalograms" by Torres Palomar of Mexico.

December, 1914-January, 1915, Exhibition of Archaic Mexican Sculpture and Pottery.

January, 1915, second Picabia Exhibition — most recent work.

February, 1915, Exhibition of Paintings by Marion H. Beckett, of New York and Paintings by Katharine N. Rhoades, of New York.

March, 1915, fifth John Marin Exhibition — Evolution of Marin.

April, 1915, third Children's Work Exhibition — Children of New York Public Schools taught under a new system.

November, 1915, Paintings of Oscar Blumner of New York — Introduced for first time, as a one-man show.

December, 1915, Eli Nadelman Exhibition — Sculpture in Marble, Bronze and Wood, and original drawings. First Nadelman Exhibition in America.

January, 1916, sixth John Marin Exhibition.

February, 1916, A. Walkowitz Exhibition — Development of abstractions in black and white and color.

March, 1916, Exhibition of original Photographs (straight) by Paul Strand of New York.

April 4, 1916, Marsden Hartley Exhibition—recent work done during last two years' sojourn in Berlin.

May, 1916, Drawings by Miss Georgia O'Keeffe of South Carolina. Paintings by Mr. Rene D. Lafferty of Philadelphia. Watercolors and drawings by Mr. C. Duncan of New York.

Outside of all these exhibitions, of course, must be added the exhibition of color-photography, first in America, in 1907, and numerous other exhibitions, of important photographic work.

APPENDIX II

TWO COMMENTS

IT is only fair to the press to say that here and there, in most unexpected places, not only articles but editorials appeared admonishing the public to be cautious about condemning the new art too impulsively.

We have chosen two such expressions from places so different, as London, and Reno, Nevada.

Apropos the Russian Ballet and its extraordinary music, the London "Times," in a leading editorial, July 13, 1913, said:

"We have entered into one of those periods of artistic revolution in which the public, audience, or spectators become partisans and express their opinions as if they were at a political meeting. The Russian Ballet, for instance, produced a conflict of opinion last Friday, which recalls the conflicts provoked by the plays of Victor Hugo in the thirties. Post-Impressionism now is what the Romantic movement was then. To one party it means the end of all beauty; to the other a new birth of it. People no longer clap or hiss because they think a particular performance is well or ill done. Even in England, where the arts are not commonly taken very seriously, they are beginning to clap or hiss on principle, and to feel that they are making history when they do so. Partisans on both sides are probably not very clear in their minds why they like Post-Impressionism or dislike it; but the word, vague and clumsy as it is, does imply to them a set of tendencies by which all the arts may be ruined or regenerated. It is not merely a fashion in painting, but, like Romanticism,

a movement of the mind which is trying to express itself through all means of artistic expression.

"Of this the new turn taken by the Russian Ballet is a striking proof; for no one can suppose that the artists concerned in that enterprise are haters of beauty because of their own incompetence to achieve it. They have every material inducement to continue delighting the world with Ballets like Carnival or Scheherazade; and, if they attempt a new kind of art, it must be because they are driven to it by some force in themselves too powerful to be withstood. Masters like M. Nijinsky do not try dangerous experiments on the public for the mere pleasure of trying them; and it is a little presumptuous to assume that they are suddenly afflicted by sheer perversity of taste. It is more probable that they are possessed by that ardour of discovery which is common both to great artists and to great men of science, indeed to all men whose interest in life is stronger than their desire for their own comfort.

"Most people make the mistake of thinking that the development of an art consists altogether of what is called invention and not of discovery; and for that reason they often resent innovations as mere perversities. If a thing has been well done already they cannot see why it should not continue to be done. But the artist knows that he cannot invent again what has been once invented. He knows, too, that these seeming inventions are also discoveries of the possibilities of his art; and that when discovery has been carried very far in one direction it cannot be carried any further. The history of all arts proves this. After Michel Angelo no one could invent anything fresh in his manner, because he had discovered all that could be discovered about his method of art. Renaissance architecture prevailed in Europe because no new discoveries were possible in Gothic.

"The Romantic movement changed English poetry when there was nothing more to be said in the manner of Pope. You may prefer the old art to the new, but even if you are right in preferring it, you are not therefore right in condemning those who practice the new art. For they have no alternative. Either they must be mere imitators of the great men of the past or they must make a new start; and the true artist can no more content himself with imitation than the true philosopher can content himself with repeating what other philosophers have said.

"Behind all representation in the arts there is the impulse of expression; and that will make its discoveries wherever there is most to be discovered, turning naturally to those elements of the art which have lately been neglected. If we understand this we shall see that a new artisitc movement, such as Post-Impressionism, is not to be judged merely by a few pictures or to be condemned because those pictures seem to us very unlike reality. Whatever may come of it, it is something that is happening in all the arts, because discovery is turning in a new direction. All the successes of the past are obstacles to new success of the same kind, and discovery naturally takes a line of least resistance away from them. For a long time, in every art, artists have been raising expectations which they found it difficult, if not impossible, to satisfy. In painting, with its effort at complete illusion, they have provoked comparisons with Velasquez. In music, with its elaborate forms, they must do as well as Beethoven if they are to succeed. The dance, as we are used to it, demands an easy grace in every movement, which M. Nijinsky himself cannot combine with novelties of expression. He has found that, if he is to be a discoverer in his art, he must teach his public not to expect this easy grace, this formal and accustomed beauty, from the start. And that is the purpose of Post-

Impressionism in all the arts. It is determined not to arouse expectations which it cannot satisfy.

"The public may begin by thinking it all crude and ugly and childish; and it will be the more delighted by any beauties which it discovers afterwards. Hitherto the arts have promised more than they could possibly perform. Now they shall promise nothing, and so perform at least more than they promise. It is natural, perhaps, that the public should resent this as a kind of discourtesy. The artist who makes no professions seems to them lacking in respect, and they are inclined to hoot him as an impudent charlatan. But there are very few artists who wish to be hooted, and the real charlatan usually flatters his public. Whatever may be said against Post-Impressionists in all the arts, they are not flatterers."

It is a far cry from London to Reno, and the differences between the two places are not measured by the miles between them.

Leading editorial from the "Journal," Reno, July 11, 1913:

SIMPLE SOLOMON

"When Solomon staked his reputation for wisdom as well as originality on the assertion that there is nothing new under the sun, he did not think some day the Cubist painter, the Futurist artist, and the color musician would rise in the twentieth century and make him ridiculous. There is something new under the sun even in these departures, and like everything original since the first sin, the innovations are now roundly condemned.

"It is the fashion now to condemn the Cubist and the Futurist in art, even as not long ago it was the fashion to condemn the realist, the impressionist and the Post-Impressionist; but it is a peculiar tribute to the authority of an innovation that it requires such a general attack of condemnation.

A trivial thing requires mere neglect; a war of condemnation implies some strong and virile thing to be subdued.

"These new things have a substantial basis for existence; else they would not exist. Their novelty has caused some extravagant adherents to carry them to unreasonable excess. They have abused the discoveries, not used them. They will pass away but the new principles will survive.

"The cubist takes his cue from the idea of perspective itself — carried to excess. No one can imagine anything but straight lines as the basis for 'vanishing points.' Curved lines, while apparent and obvious, are not the scientific representations of actualities. The things we see strike the eye on the basis of flat images and our imagination brings out shape and significance. It is but a simple reversal to present flat art and give the imagination equal play in reconstructing real images in the eye.

"If we take a half-tone engraving and examine it with a magnifying glass we find it is a series of holes of uniform size but more or less dense on the surface according to the requirements of light, shade and line. Magnify a half-tone 100 times and we have a large grating of black and white circles or squares. That is cubist art. It requires a slight shift in the point of view, a little development and stimulation of the imagination — nothing more.

"When Gulliver visited the Brobdingnagians and viewed the complexions of their women at close range, it almost made him sick — yet they were noted beauties. He looked too close. When they looked at him they observed no complexion — they looked too far. Yet each had a concrete complexion and the only trouble was the point of view and the shock of comparison.

"The futurists have a very novel and, at this time, an outlandish art. One of them has a full page picture used as an

advertisement of the peculiar sound of a horn. It is a picture of a sound that saws its way through other sounds. There is a straight, fan-like picture for a constant, augmenting note, rising in scale. It is gray. There is a black ellipse for a loud varying noise of fairly regular variation of note, and so on. The foreign noise of the horn is shown as utterly unlike in form, intensity, regularity or harmony, any other sound.

"If one has a diagram one can understand the futurist art and, when one understands, he approves. The new arts are simply aids to comparison, discrimination and inspiration. They have all the delights of wine-tasting or salad-judging — and some salads are vile.

"The color musician has developed only another exercise in discrimination. If we were to make mathematics of music we would find that there is an exact relation between the number of vibrations of notes an octave apart; a constant relation between the vibrations in the natural and the sharp; a direct ratio between the vibrations of the notes in a chord; a formula for harmony and another for discord. It is an interesting mathematical study, a science as well as an art, and it proves that our appreciation through the senses is based on natural mathematical sequences and on well understood ratios, seasoned for variety's sake by divergences from type.

"Now the color musician has taken the spectrum and made notes out of it like the notes on the gamut. He has a color-scale and can do as much on it for the delight of the eye as a musician can with the musical scale for the ear. He merely brings out an extra way of enjoying distinctions and of enjoying that most restful of enjoyable things — conventionality. The certainty and the satisfaction of the conventional is about the most assuring thing in all experience. There is no more steadying feeling in all the world than to

know that two and two make four, and that c-a-t spells cat. The more ways by which we can be assured of the belief we hold by faith, that there is an uniform, unchanging, all-pervading rule in the world, arguing an individual, mastering central consciousness and direction, the happier we are.

"The cubists and the futurists and the color musicians may be faddists, but they help to drive out old Solomon's pessimism. They help us to understand by purely human experience how it is that there may be some things which even humans cannot understand—but which are."

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